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27 November 1984

NEAR EAST/SOUTH ASIA REPORT

CONTENTS

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Various Arab Figures Discuss Jordanian-Egyptian Rapprochement (AL-TADAMUN, No 78, 6 Oct 84)	1
General Arab Reaction Reviewed, by Bakr 'Uwaydah	
Jordanian Foreign Minister Speaks	
Egyptian Foreign Minister Comments	
Kuwaiti Minister Criticizes Decision	
Syrian Minister Discusses Step	
Jordanian Information Minister's Observations, by Najih Khalil	
Egyptian Minister Describes Step, by Ihsan Bakr	
Moroccan Attitude Toward Resumption, by Abu Bakr al-Sadiq al-Sharif	
Palestinians Comment on Resumption, by 'Ali al-Khalili	
Tunisian Palestinians Refuse Comment	
Saudis Offer Neutral Response	
Various Gulf Leaders Comment	
Lebanese Sources Expect Blowup, by Ibrahim al-Burjawi	

ARAB AFRICA

EGYPT

Economy Minister, Currency Dealers Clash (Ihsan Bakr; AL-TADAMIN, No 75, 15 Sep 84)	35
Joint Research Shields Scientific Espionage (Rif'at Sayyid Ahmad; AL-SHA'B, 21, 28 Aug 84)	40

MOROCCO

- New Political Tendencies Analyzed
(Zakya Daoud; LAMALIF, No 159, Oct 84) 50

TUNISIA

- Released Ghannouchi Discusses Prison Life, Other Matters
(Rached Ghannouchi Interview; AL-MUJTAMA', No 682,
11 Sep 84) 60

ARAB EAST/ISRAEL

LEBANON

- Lebanese Political Leader Demands Liberation of South
(Anis Sa'd Interview; AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI,
No 348, 9-15 Sep 84) 70
- Phalangists To Continue Policy of Late Leader
(Nabil Barakis; AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI, No 384,
9-15 Sep 84) 79
- Nabih Birri Interviewed on American Mediation
(AL-HAWADITH, No 1457, 5 Oct 84) 85
- Najjadah Leader Discusses Relations With Phalange
(Adnan al-Hakim Interview; AL-HAWADITH, No 1457,
5 Oct 84) 92
- New Phalange Party Chief Discusses Party's Positions, Future
(Elie Karamah Interview; AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI,
No 383, 3-9 Sep 84) 96
- Pessimism Seen Over Prospects of Security Agreement
(Ghassan Bayram; AL-MUSTAQBAL, No 393, 1 Sep 84) 105
- Travel, Aviation in Lebanon Face Crisis
(AL-HAWADITH, No 1457, 5 Oct 84) 109

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

- Al-Hut Expresses Demands Concerning Palestinian Civilians
in Lebanon
(Shafiq al-Hut Interview; AL-TADAMUN, No 75, 15 Sep 84). 113
- PLF Military Commander Discusses Convocation of National Council
(Abu al-'Abbas Interview; AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA
AL-DUWALI, No 383, 3-9 Sep 84) 119

VARIOUS ARAB FIGURES DISCUSS JORDANIAN-EGYPTIAN RAPPROCHEMENT

General Arab Reaction Reviewed

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 78, 6 Oct 84 p 9

[Article by Bakr 'Uwaydah]

[Text] Welcome and praise.

Rejection and condemnation.

Reserve and anxiety.

Silence and watchfulness.

Under these four headings one can list the Arab reactions to the Jordanian decision to cross over, that is, Jordan's decision to establish full diplomatic relations with Egypt. Before moving on to these four headings, let us pause briefly before the title "The story of the Jordanian crossing."

As AL-TADAMUN had anticipated in the last issue, the phase of the Perez-Shamir cabinet in Israel is one of labor pains to pave the way for the phase following the presidential elections in the United States. Three possibilities are likely with respect to this latter phase: Jordan will be included in the peace formula, Egypt will relinquish the Camp David formula, or a limited war will take place to impose new facts.

With respect to these possibilities, on grounds that the phase of labor pains must arise from some background developments which will have the effect of preparing for the phase following the American presidential elections, one can say that Jordan's decision to restore relations with Egypt can be included in the category of crossings or transitions from the state of delivery to the state of imposition of new facts. Here it is worth pointing out that these facts will be reflected in the negative or positive sense one place or another in accordance with the calculations of the political leaders concerned with them.

In the view of Amman and Cairo, the Jordanian decision is a transition from a state of paralysis to a sphere of movement with the goal of anticipating

complications which could arise as a result of the present alliance in Israel and the intention which Shimon Peres has devised to launch a political campaign aimed at extending the old occupation, though under the guise of bargaining over peace and negotiations. There are Arab capitals which share this viewpoint with Cairo and Amman while not stating so explicitly.

In Damascus, Tripoli and Aden, the Jordanian decision seems to be a transition from a state of hesitancy to a state of decisiveness -- that is, these capitals consider that Jordan was basically hesitant about being included in the Camp David formula and is now settling its affairs and passing over from the state of hesitancy to the realm of decisiveness. Jordanian officials make haste to reply to this thesis by denying it in the following way: if it had not been for the rejection, by Jordan specifically, of the Camp David formula, this formula would have borne fruit rather than withering away. In addition, the decision to resume relations with Egypt under Husni Mubarak's leadership was a transition on the order of a breach of the Camp David formula, and not a reconciliation with it.

Between its character as a transition from paralysis to movement and from hesitancy to decisiveness, the Jordanian decision, in the view of Arab capitals which are known for their intense reluctance to react or become excited, seems like a kind of transition to further disputes and rifts on the Arab stage. If these capitals did not state so explicitly and directly after the declaration of the Jordanian decision, there are elements in the conversations of people who are close to decisionmaking circles in them which hint at and suggest it.

Therefore the Arab reactions to Jordan's decision or transition which created an uproar in the region seem to have ranged from welcome and praise in capitals which did not basically sever their relations with Cairo (Khartoum, Muscat and Mogadishu), to capitals which condemned and rejected it, capitals which had reservations and expressed fear of further schism, and capitals which preferred to adhere to the rule "Sometimes silence is golden."

In addition to that, there are people who consider that the Jordanian decision is a transition to the formulation of a new alliance which will take the form of a triangle whose sides are Jordan, Egypt and the Palestine Liberation Organization. The people who hold this view say that this alliance will not of necessity be directed against other parties, but it will of necessity clash with Arab parties which have scores to settle with Jordan or the Palestinian party that is slated to enter into the heart of this formula. In other words, in the view of some people, the creation of this triangle will result in complicating matters which had been on the verge of relaxation, by its nature the complication of matters sets those matters on the brink of an explosion once again, and the stage which is the most subject to such an explosion can only be Lebanon.

In the light of all the foregoing, one can view the Jordanian decision only as a transition in the region to a phase which bears as much promise of bad luck as it is fraught with hope, and the following pages of AL-TADAMUN consist of an observation of the effects which will arise from Jordan's transition as far as this new phase is concerned.

Jordanian Foreign Minister Speaks

London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic No 78, 6 Oct 84 pp 10-12

[Text] Reactions to the Jordanian decision to restore diplomatic relations with Egypt are continuing to appear, one after the other. As usual, the Arab world has become split among supporters, people who are opposed and people with reservations. However, all the parties agree that the Jordanian decision is to be considered a quantum leap on the Arab and international chess board. In addition to that, the Jordanian step was not a political surprise so much as an important strategic transition which will change many calculations and impose many variables.

In order to learn about the background of the Jordanian decision and its dimensions and repercussions, Khalil Matar, AL-TADAMUN's correspondent in New York, met with the foreign minister of Jordan, Mr Tahir al-Misri, the Egyptian foreign minister, Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad, the foreign minister of Kuwait, and Mr Faruq al-Shar', the Syrian foreign minister, and held a conversation with each of them on this hot subject.

In an exclusive conversation he held with AL-TADAMUN, which met with him the day following the declaration of the resumption of Jordanian-Egyptian relations, the Jordanian foreign minister, Mr Tahir al-Misri, stressed that this step on Jordan's part had not come as a surprise to decisionmaking circles in Arab capitals, since King Husayn had been careful to notify most Arab leaders of the decision before he announced it. In addition, the Jordanian minister rejected what could be described as the Syrian "veto" of the Jordanian decision, which he said was a purely internal affair, and [said] "just as we do not interfere in Syria's internal affairs, we do not permit Syria to interfere in our own internal affairs." Here is the text of the conversation with Mr Tahir al-Misri:

AL-TADAMUN: What are the background details of the Jordanian decision to restore diplomatic relations with Egypt, and what repercussions will result from them on the Arab stage in your opinion?

Tahir al-Misri: The goal in the restoration of Jordanian-Egyptian relations is obvious. Egypt is a major Arab country which was boycotted by the Arab countries because of the policy it chose at Camp David. However, President Husni Mubarak has taken a different tack toward Arab issues. His positions regarding Iraq, Lebanon and the Palestinian cause are positive and are characterized by responsibility. This evidence shows that we in Jordan and the other Arab countries must take a bold decision to restore relations with Egypt to their former state.

AL-TADAMUN: Your declaration about the resumption of relations with Egypt seemed to come as a surprise to everyone, and some Arab countries consider that it contradicts the resolutions of the Baghdad and Amman conferences. How do you explain your abandonment of these resolutions and the unanimous Arab position, and your adoption of isolated action in taking this decision outside an Arab summit which would endorse the restoration of relations with Egypt?

Tahir al-Misri: The decision was not a surprise. There has consistently been a positive evolution in relations between Jordan and Egypt. In any event, these relations never had been severed. We prepared for this step, but we were waiting for the appropriate time. As far as the Arab countries go, I do not consider that the Jordanian decision came as a surprise, since most Arab leaders were fully informed some time ago, before the declaration of the resumption of relations. King Husayn got in touch with most Arab kings and presidents and informed them of the decision before officially announcing it. As far as the Arab summit resolutions go, the Baghdad summit did not adopt a resolution that relations with Egypt should be severed. Rather, a recommendation was made by the conference of foreign ministers that these relations should be severed and that each Arab country should be left the freedom to take the decision to cut off relations at a time it considered appropriate. The proof of that is that three Arab countries did not commit themselves to this resolution and continued to attend the conferences of the Arab League.

AL-TADAMUN: There are people who consider that there is a connection between Murphy's tour of the countries of the region and this decision of yours.

Tahir al-Misri: Absolutely not. I said that this decision was taken some time ago. Murphy did not come to the area because of the Jordanian decision.

AL-TADAMUN: It is also being stated repeatedly that the Jordanian decision is related to the development of a Syrian-American rapprochement on the issue of Lebanon and peace efforts in the region. Was your step aimed at anticipating the new developments which were to occur in the general situation in the Middle East, or does it fall within the category of facilitating rather than obstructing?

Tahir al-Misri: Jordan does not condone the policy of axes. The restoration of relations with Egypt was a step which the United States welcomed. When we announced our step, we were not anticipating an American-Syrian dialogue; our steps are parallel, and will be followed by other parallel steps which are in keeping with this orientation.

AL-TADAMUN: As soon as your decision to restore relations with Egypt was announced, Syria took the initiative of attacking this new policy and threatened to take negative steps to obstruct your opening to Egypt. How do you evaluate the Syrian response? What indications will arise from it, in your estimation?

Tahir al-Misri: Syria announced its displeasure with this decision outright and there is no further comment to be made on it.

AL-TADAMUN: What risks will result from the Syrian position? How will Jordan confront what could be called a Syrian "veto"?

Tahir al-Misri: The decision is a domestic Jordanian matter. Syria cannot impose its opinion on this subject on us; if Syria wants to take a decision related to the situation, this is its business and we will not interfere in it, because we do not allow anyone to interfere in our affairs.

AL-TADAMUN: What Arab country, in your opinion, will come after Jordan in restoring relations with Egypt?

Tahir al-Misri: There are a number of Arab countries which are almost ready for such a decision. I cannot identify them.

AL-TADAMUN: Do you believe that the restoration of relations with Egypt will have the effect of thwarting any Israeli military action aimed at Jordan in the near future?

Tahir al-Misri: Israel's intentions toward Jordan continue to be well known, and Israel's conspiracy against Jordan continues to go on, for the reason that Sharon has recently declared that the West Bank of the Jordan River is part of Israel. We are of the conviction that Israel's next step will be toward Jordan. This does not mean that our decision to restore relations with Egypt can be explained by this conviction; rather, it is a feeling on our part that Arab interests require that Egypt return to the Arab fold, because further alienating Egypt from the Arab world will harm the Arab cause.

AL-TADAMUN: Some observers have interpreted your step as a Jordanian rapprochement to Camp David policy. Do you agree with that? Do you see that it has any effect on the peace negotiations in the Middle East?

Tahir al-Misri: Again, no. It is Jordan which killed Camp David. Had it joined it from the beginning, it would have become a legitimate political line. Let me say again that our decision to restore relations with Egypt has no relationship to Camp David, indeed, to the contrary, the purpose could be to get Egypt away from Camp David.

AL-TADAMUN: The date for the convening of the coming Arab summit is still unsettled because of existing Arab disputes. Do you consider that the Jordanian step might help hasten the convening of this summit or be a reason for its cancellation or further postponement?

Tahir al-Misri: The Arab summit has been postponed for numerous reasons. We have a feeling that Arab bodies do not want to hold the summit. The Jordanian position on this issue, of calling for the holding of the summit as soon as possible, is clear. If the convening of the summit is postponed, that does not mean that our step toward Egypt is the reason. There are Arab countries which have declared to Arab officials their lack of desire that a summit be convened. Mr. Chedli Klibi, the secretary general of the League of Arab States, had previously declared, prior to the decision to restore Jordanian relations with Egypt, that the summit might be postponed. I hope that no party will take our step as a pretext for postponing the summit conference which was originally postponed last year.

AL-TADAMUN: What reasons have so far prevented the holding of the Arab summit? How can one reduce the obstacles which stand in the way of its being convened?

Tahir al-Misri: Some Arab countries feel that the political atmosphere in the Arab world is not favorable for the holding of a summit, and in addition

there has been a deterioration in Arab relations, which have reached a very poor state. The holding of the summit in the view of some people will have the effect of causing Arab disputes to erupt and complicating situations.

AL-TADAMUN: Above and beyond the repercussions which the decision to restore Jordanian relations with Egypt will bring to bear on the Arab stage, it appears that the Palestinian situation is likely to be more greatly affected by these repercussions. Do you consider that your relations with Egypt will increase the severity of the split in Palestinian ranks or that they will help give concrete form to a Palestinian vision which is more appreciative of the accelerating changes in the region?

Tahir al-Misri: The decision to restore Jordanian-Egyptian relations cannot be allowed to affect all aspects of Arab political life. 'Arafat anticipated the Jordanian step when he visited Egypt toward the end of last year.

AL-TADAMUN: By the way, what is the status of your discussions with Yasir 'Arafat on arriving at formulas which will get the Jordanian-Palestinian understanding moving toward a confederation?

Tahir al-Misri: Yasir 'Arafat is present today in Amman (the date of this interview was the 26th of last month) and there are no disputes between us. We have an understanding with the organization as far as many issues go, and we are trying to increase this understanding on some points which are still under discussion.

AL-TADAMUN: Could you define the points of differences in views for us?

Tahir al-Misri: There is a dispute over points which we have not discussed yet, and we hope that no dispute will occur between us.

AL-TADAMUN: In the light of the conditions which have come into being recently and the changes following the Libyan-Moroccan union, the resumption of Egyptian-Jordanian relations and the Algerian-Tunisian-Mauritanian agreement, do you consider it is possible that the Arab world will split up into new axes?

Tahir al-Misri: Let me reiterate that we in Jordan are against the policy of axes. There are some countries which form axes out of fear, but not every Arab grouping can be described as an axis. Shall we call the Gulf Cooperation Council, for instance, an axis? Of course not, because these countries have been brought together by a single policy and common interests. I would like to give reassurance that our relations with Egypt are not aimed at establishing any axis in the sense you have discussed.

AL-TADAMUN: The convening of the Palestinian National Council has been postponed a number of times. Could one consider your resumption of relations a prelude to the holding of the council in Cairo?

Tahir al-Misri: Why the insistence on linking everything that goes on in the Arab world to the Jordanian step? The Palestinian National Council has been postponed because of Arab considerations which Jordan has nothing to do with.

AL-TADAMUN: Don't you believe that this step of yours will support Yasir 'Arafat's position in confrontation with his opponents?

Tahir al-Misri: Abu 'Ammar's problem is with Syria, and the restoration of Jordanian-Egyptian relations will not have an effect on whether the Palestine National Council meets or fails to meet. It is Syria, not Jordan, that is obstructing and delaying the meeting of the council.

AL-TADAMUN: What chance do the peaceful efforts aimed at ending the Iraqi-Iranian war have of succeeding? How can the restoration of relations with Egypt be employed to stop this bloodshed?

Tahir al-Misri: This subject was raised some time ago and has been discussed many times. The situation on the front is well known to Jordan. Jordanian attempts to put a stop to the war are well known, and Iraq's positions in this area are well known. It is Iran which refuses to stop the war, under encouragement from some Arab countries. If the situation remains as it is, the war will continue and efforts at mediation will fail.

AL-TADAMUN: What is your evaluation of the union between Libya and Morocco? What changes will it bring about on the Arab or regional stage?

Tahir al-Misri: The union between Libya and Morocco is a private affair. We welcome all Arab unions which are carefully studied and based on firm foundations.

AL-TADAMUN: There has been much talk about an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon, while paralysis dominates the Lebanese stage. Do you consider there is a possibility for getting an Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon soon?

Tahir al-Misri: From the sense I have gotten from my meetings here in New York and the news that has circulated in the press, it appears that Israel is really thinking of withdrawing from southern Lebanon. That is not proof of the "nobility of its character" -- rather, there are special reasons related to its security and its economy. Israel is really being squeezed in Lebanon, and it wants to extricate itself as soon as possible. There are some encouraging early signs and arrangements that an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon could occur soon. Murphy's visit to the region underlines the validity of what I have referred to.

AL-TADAMUN: Does this mean that Shimon Peres' statement about an imminent Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon might lie in the category of serious intentions?

Tahir al-Misri: No. One cannot consider that he is well-intentioned. He was forced to say what he did. The withdrawal has been imposed upon him. As I said previously, the withdrawal is not "nobility of character on their part," but because Israel is really being bled in Lebanon.

AL-TADAMUN: For some time the area has been witnessing international activity aimed at coming up with a solution to the Middle East crisis. Could one

say that the area is on the verge of a comprehensive solution, or that such a solution is still remote?

Tahir al-Misri: In my opinion the solution is still remote, as far as America and Israel are concerned. In addition, the fragmented Arab situation is not encouraging.

AL-TADAMUN: Does that also apply to the Palestinian situation?

Tahir al-Misri: Of course, because the Palestinian situation is part of the Arab situation and the fragmentation within the Liberation Organization is a reflection of the sorrowful situation in the Arab world.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Comments

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 78, 6 Oct 84 pp 12, 13

[Text] For his part, in his conversation with AL-TADAMUN, the Egyptian foreign minister, Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, considered that the restoration of relations between Cairo and Amman is a "good introduction," but he stressed once again what Cairo had previously reiterated, in the words of an unofficial person, which is that Egypt is resuming its relations with the Arab countries without haste or pressure, without a desire to embarrass anyone, and without preconditions as well. Here is the text of AL-TADAMUN's conversation with Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid:

AL-TADAMUN: What is your evaluation of the Jordanian step of restoring diplomatic relations with you? What positive features will that bring to bear on overall conditions in the area?

'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid: We of course are happy with this step which the Jordanian monarch and the Jordanian government have taken. There is no doubt that this should be considered a logical conclusion of the growing relations between Jordan and Egypt. I say growing relations because political relations existed and were present. I as an Egyptian am happy with this Jordanian step, and I believe that our Jordanian brothers are happy with it as well. This happiness will increase when we go back and meet with all our Arab brothers to transcend our differences and look to the future in an attempt to forget the past.

AL-TADAMUN: Do you consider that the Jordanian step will influence the peace process in the region, positively or negatively? What is the significance of its timing at this stage specifically?

'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid: One must first consider this step in terms of the significance it entails in terms of Arab relations in general and Jordanian-Egyptian ones in particular. In my opinion, the Jordanian step is a good beginning, since we as Arabs must spell out what we want before we ask America and Israel to spell out what each of them wants.

AL-TADAMUN: However, most Arab countries are calling for a restoration of relations with Egypt, although on the condition that you abandon Camp David.

'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid: That is to be rejected, because Egypt has international commitments and Egypt honors its agreements and treaties. These Arab voices which you are talking about cannot compel Egypt to adopt any position, because Egypt will not allow any conditions to be imposed on it, since Egypt does not impose countervailing conditions.

AL-TADAMUN: Do you believe that the Jordanian step will pave the way for other Arab countries to resume relations with Egypt?

'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid: In my view, some Arab countries are thinking seriously of restoring relations with us, and will take the decision at the appropriate time.

AL-TADAMUN: In our meeting with him, the foreign minister of Jordan, Mr Tahir al-Misri, stated that intensified consultations and contacts with the Arab countries and with Egypt preceded the Jordanian decision. Are there contacts of this nature between you and the other Arab countries on this subject specifically?

'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid: We take positions which are distinguished by great caution, secrecy and the desire not to embarrass any party.

AL-TADAMUN: Are we to understand that there is another Arab country which will take the step Jordan did?

'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid: We hope that there will be more than one country.

AL-TADAMUN: What are these countries, in your estimation?

'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid: It is difficult to name names. Let me leave that to your estimation.

AL-TADAMUN: Could one say that Iraq will be the next country?

'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid (laughing): Honestly, I do not know.

AL-TADAMUN: Do you consider the Jordanian decision to be an endorsement of the Camp David policy? In other words, might one imagine that the Jordanian step will reactivate the formula which was based on Camp David?

'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid: I do not believe that any restoration of relations is of necessity an endorsement of any specific situation or a rejection of any situation. There are countries which have diplomatic relations and have their own differing positions. This means that one must not reach conclusions about the endorsement of specific positions. Let us look at the positive features which have arisen from the resumption of relations, and the way in which that reflects on the common Arab interest.

AL-TADAMUN: What is your position on the Libyan-Moroccan union? In what categories would you place it?

'Isamat 'Abd-al-Majid: Egypt has not taken an official position on this subject. In a personal capacity, I consider that as long as a union is made between two independent Arab states without being directed against any other state, these two countries have total freedom to adopt what will be in keeping with the interests of their people.

AL-TADAMUN: Some observers have interpreted the Jordanian step as a first step in the establishment of a Jordanian-Iraqi-Egyptian-Palestinian axis. Do you support this interpretation? If the answer is no, how can one give concrete form to an Arab position which will exert pressure in the direction of peace?

'Isamat 'Abd-al-Majid: Let us wait and see. There have not yet been any of the long-range goals you are talking about. Developments could bring them closer to realization, in favor of Arab action. In other words, the dimensions which you are talking about might make sense, but we do not see them at the present time. If we talk about this subject, we will be embarking on conjecture.

AL-TADAMUN: The Palestinian dilemma is almost absolute. Palestinian attempts are being made to emerge from this dilemma, at variance with some Arab calculations which have an interest in keeping Palestinian action paralyzed at the present time. How does Egypt view this state of affairs? Is there a possibility that the Palestinian National Council will meet in Cairo?

'Isamat 'Abd-al-Majid: We knew that the Palestinian National Council was on the verge of meeting on the 27th of last month, but Syria intervened to prevent it from doing so; although there was a majority of more than two-thirds supporting Yasir 'Arafat's position of working to convene the council, it seems that a few people prevented the council from meeting. Therefore, the assumption that it will meet in Cairo is farfetched. Since Syria prevented it from meeting in Algeria, this means that it will be able to impose a "veto" on its meeting in Cairo.

AL-TADAMUN: Does that mean that you oppose the convening of the Palestinian National Council in Cairo, even if it is a conference of Palestinian conciliation?

'Isamat 'Abd-al-Majid: We hope that there will be a Palestinian conciliation, in the first place, because conciliation will be reached not so much in conjunction with where the council meets as with Palestinian desire and will, and I am certain that the majority of the Palestinian people and the Palestinian brothers support 'Arafat's policy.

AL-TADAMUN: If we assume that a Palestinian conciliation occurs, will you then accept the convening of the National Council in Cairo?

'Isamat 'Abd-al-Majid: I cannot reply to this question either, because it is a hypothetical question. I do not want to say that it is necessary that the council meet in Cairo, lest some people say that they refuse to go to Egypt. We do not want to increase the severity of the dispute. Indeed, to the contrary, we are trying to limit the dispute among Palestinians.

Kuwaiti Minister Criticizes Decision

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 78, 6 Oct 84 p 14

[Text] In his conversation with AL-TADAMUN, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad, the foreign minister of Kuwait, expressed his belief that Jordan acted hastily in taking the step and that the time for declaring this decision was not appropriate, especially since the Arabs' situation is unenviable in light of the disputes that [already] exist among them. Here is the text of the conversation with Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad:

AL-TADAMUN: Let us begin with Jordan's decision to resume its relations with Egypt. How do you evaluate this decision?

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad: This is the first time I have given my opinion on the subject. It can be summarized by saying that consultation should have taken place with the Arab kings and presidents before this step was ventured on. I consider that it was a hasty step and that it did not come at the appropriate time.

AL-TADAMUN: Do you consider that it will have an effect on Jordanian-Arab relations?

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad: No one can envy us Arab parties for having few disputes among ourselves. I hope that this matter will not cause an increase in the rifts in Arab ranks. Everyone can give his opinion about what has happened. Of course Jordan has its own opinion on its policy, and it has the freedom to take any decision it wants. Likewise, we have the right to give our opinion concerning any event.

AL-TADAMUN: Do you imagine that the Jordanian step will be a factor in postponing the Arab summit, which has not been held for 2 years, or that it will be an incentive to the other Arab countries to restore their relations with Egypt?

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad: First, I hope that the Arab summit conference will not be postponed again, because, after what has happened between Morocco and Libya, then between Jordan and Egypt, the conference must be held in order to discuss these sudden developments. The question that arises is not so much one of bringing Egypt back as of bringing Arab ranks together. Therefore, I hope that the summit will not be postponed and that it will be held at its scheduled time.

AL-TADAMUN: How do you evaluate the Oujda agreement between Libya and Morocco? What in your view are its dimensions?

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad: I do not want to get into the internal affairs of countries which have seen fit to arrange a federation among themselves. This is part of their own business. Rather, all I want is that this federation's fate not be similar to that of the other federations.

AL-TADAMUN: There are countries which have disparaged the Oujda agreement, especially countries in the Maghreb. We now see the Maghreb divided into two camps. How do you explain this split?

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad: I am sad to see these conflicting positions, because anything that happens in any Arab country must be reflected on Arab consensus and Arab reconciliation. Therefore, it does not gladden us at all that there should be a dispute. I hope that the people involved will find some way to solve the problems of the Maghreb.

AL-TADAMUN: The Abha conference meetings were in their own right an Arab precedent for this sort of consensus over important issues concerning the security of the Gulf and the region. What were its dimensions and effects on the Arab world?

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad: The Gulf Cooperation Council is a branch of the Arab League; we are not a grouping outside the league framework. When we talk about subjects which concern the region, we are better qualified than others to discuss them and reach agreement over them.

I see nothing wrong in having an agreement among the countries of the council over matters that concern the region and the stability of the region, as a first step along the road to agreement among the countries of the Arab League.

AL-TADAMUN: In light of the Oujda agreements, then the resumption of Jordanian-Egyptian relations, do you consider that the Arab world has ventured on a policy of axes?

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad: I gave you my opinion on the subject of Jordan and Egypt, and I would like to content myself with what I have said.

AL-TADAMUN: Going back to the Abha Conference, the most important resolutions were connected to the security of the Gulf, because its security, and that of the Red Sea, are part of the security of the Indian Ocean. Nonetheless, there were some situations where foreign intervention was required to protect the region. What does this request, which you stood against, mean?

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad: Our meeting in Abha was not concerned with this. We issued a communique which considered that the responsibility for the security of the region lay with the countries in it, not any other countries.

AL-TADAMUN: So how do you explain the continued presence in the Red Sea and Gulf area of Western ships which came to remove the mines in the Red Sea?

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad: These ships actually did come to remove the mines. Saudi Arabia requested this aid of the French and the Westerners. I see nothing wrong in our seeking the aid of countries which have their technological expertise, to uncover mines, not to protect Saudi Arabia from foreign aggression.

AL-TADAMUN: The Arab foreign ministers' conference which was supposed to be held in Tunisia has not met, but the Cooperation Council ministers' conference has. What is the reason for the postponement of the foreign ministers' conference, and how can we explain the inability to transform the Gulf agreement into a more comprehensive Arab grouping?

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad: The Arab ministers' conference was not postponed for political reasons. When the seven-man committee met, we reached agreement in Baghdad that the conference would be postponed to 23 September. We then discovered that time was short because we had to come to New York to attend the opening of the General Assembly session. There were issues which were supposed to have been discussed and approved in various committees derived from the conference, and we are waiting the results of those. We have agreed to hold our meeting in New York while we are in the United Nations.

AL-TADAMUN: There are some stories about disturbances inside Kuwait caused by Shiites connected to Iran. What is your comment?

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad: We in Kuwait do not believe that there are [in this context, distinctions between] Shiites or Sunnites. At the same time, we must not deny that Iran is earnestly trying to export the Iranian revolution by means of groups which have no loyalty to Kuwait and are not basically Kuwaiti.

AL-TADAMUN: How do you cope with these acts of interference?

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad: I believe that every country is subject to groups which are not affiliated with it, and it is not necessary that they be Shiite so much as that they contain citizens whose loyalty belongs to unknown parties. The most prominent example is what happened in the case of the explosions inside Kuwait a few months ago.

AL-TADAMUN: Returning to the Arab situation, Richard Murphy's visit took place at the same time as the Jordanian decision, and some people have explained that the Jordanian decision is a sequel to a Syrian-American agreement over Lebanon. Is this correct?

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad: I was not present when Murphy visited the area and have no official information in this regard.

Syrian Minister Discusses Step

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 78, 6 Oct 84 pp 15, 16

[Text] Damascus was the first Arab capital to take a hardline position, characterized by severity, of opposition to the Jordanian decision to restore diplomatic relations with Egypt. In his conversation with AL-TADAMUN, Mr Faruq al-Shar', the foreign minister of Syria, underlined this severe opposition and said that the danger in the Jordanian step lies in its exacerbating the schism and jeopardizing the opportunity for convening the summit. The discussion with the Syrian foreign minister was an occasion to ask him about other issues, such as the relationship with the Liberation Organization and the situation in Lebanon. Here is the text of Mr Faruq al-Shar''s conversation.

AL-TADAMUN: Did Jordan's step to restore its diplomatic relations with Egypt surprise you, or had it been expected on your part?

Faruq al-Shar': In the specific sense of the word "surprise," we were not surprised. Jordanian measures had been taken to prepare for this step. However, the timing of the announcement on the resumption of relations between Jordan and Egypt is a matter which undoubtedly requires a pause for reflection. We believe that this step has very great negative features. It has the effect of jeopardizing the last opportunity to "pull together" the Arab situation, since it is expected that an Arab summit will be held in 2 months, but as a result of the Jordanian step the possibility of holding this summit has been wrecked. It would have been in the Jordanian regime's power to wait till the Arab summit was held to express the opinion it has presented now, that is, the issue of the resumption of relations with Egypt; the failure to wait has its significant side, in spite of the great deal of talk on its part about Arab solidarity, the deteriorating Arab situation, and the need to hold the Arab summit. What it has done is totally contrary to that.

AL-TADAMUN: Morocco has raised the idea of holding an emergency summit which would be devoted to a discussion of the subject, the subject of Egypt and the step Jordan has taken. Why did you refuse the invitation?

Faruq al-Shar': We believe that this Moroccan step was taken to cover the Jordanian one. Rather than condemning this step and issuing a statement on this subject, Morocco came up with the idea of the summit. Moreover, what Morocco is calling for is an exceptional Arab summit conference. For what purpose? For the sake of endorsing what King Husayn has done?

AL-TADAMUN: However, there are Arab countries which have rejected the Jordanian step and other countries which have had reservations about it. Doesn't his excellency the minister think that in such an atmosphere it would have been possible for the emergency summit to come up with a resolution which was opposed to Jordan's unilaterally resuming relations with Egypt?

Faruq al-Shar': An Arab summit is not needed to issue a condemnation. The Arab countries can express their position in official statements. Some positions have been expressed by some Arab countries.

AL-TADAMUN: Had Jordanian-Syrian relations not been as they are today, would Jordan in your opinion have carried out this step?

Faruq al-Shar': I can say that Jordan's embarking on this step at a stage in which relations with Syria are not exposed to tension also has its negative significance as far as the Jordanian regime goes. In the most recent months relations between Syria and Jordan have been better than they had been for a number of years.

AL-TADAMUN: So how do you describe the Jordanian step at this stage?

Faruq al-Shar': As a grievous one.

AL-TADAMUN: From what standpoint?

Faruq al-Shar': Grievous from the standpoint that it has the goal of helping the United States and Israel with their designs in the area.

AL-TADAMUN: Does that mean that Jordan will enter into the Camp David formula?

Faruq al-Shar': Camp David or something similar to it.

AL-TADAMUN: A sort of connection has been made between the Jordanian step and the visit by the American emissary Richard Murphy to the area. Do you believe that there is a relationship between this visit and Jordan's timing in announcing the resumption of relations with Egypt? Do you believe that American promises to Jordan exist?

Faruq al-Shar': Murphy's visit to Damascus had no relationship to this matter. I am just talking about Damascus, and I do not have the right to speak for any other country. Murphy did not raise the issue of the Middle East at all when he was in Damascus.

AL-TADAMUN: What did he raise then?

Faruq al-Shar': He raised a matter of the United States' wanting to help bring about an Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon, because it, that is Israel, is sustaining great losses through its occupation of southern Lebanon.

AL-TADAMUN: Now that the Jordanian step has been taken, might we on the other hand witness some flexibility in Syrian-Palestinian relations?

Faruq al-Shar': Syrian-Palestinian relations are well and good.

AL-TADAMUN: However, it is being said that Syria is obstructing the convening of the Palestinian National Council.

Faruq al-Shar': The convening of the Palestinian National Council has no connection with Syria's relations with the Palestine Liberation Organization. There is Palestinian near-unanimity on failing to convene the council until a comprehensive agreement is reached among all the forces of the Palestinian resistance, to keep a rift from breaking out in the National Council. We believe that this step is sound.

AL-TADAMUN: What do you mean by comprehensive Palestinian agreement?

Faruq al-Shar': Having all forces in the resistance agree over a clear, specific policy and having it divest itself of the policy which 'Arafat is carrying out; this policy is well known and it is revolving in the Camp David orbit.

AL-TADAMUN: This confirms what is being said about a Syrian "veto" over Yasser 'Arafat as a person.

Faruq al-Shar': We have a "veto" over any deviation in the Palestinian cause. However, that does not mean that we are restricting the Liberation

Organization's movement or that we are trying to pre-empt Palestinian decisionmaking. Not at all. No, the issue simply is that the cause of Palestine is our cause as much as it is the cause of the Palestinian Arab people. We sacrifice ourselves as much for its sake as the Palestinian people do. In the face of this responsibility, we have the right to express our viewpoint. Let anyone who wants to adopt it do so, and anyone who does not want to is free not to, but also, conversely, we will not allow views we do not believe in to be imposed on us, and we do not accept 'Arafat's view on the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization in this manner, because it will lead to neglect of the rights of the Palestinian people.

AL-TADAMUN: Are you opposed to the holding of the Palestinian National Council in the context of Yasir 'Arafat's political movement, or under the leadership of Yasir 'Arafat?

Faruq al-Shar': This is getting into details. I might repeat here that whether or not the National Council is held is the business of the Palestinians. There are numerous forces in the resistance which believe that to convene the National Council before pending questions are resolved will lead to a split in the Liberation Organization, and they are opposed to that. We want a united, coherent Liberation Organization which has rid itself of the policy of capitulation which is to be found in it.

AL-TADAMUN: For a number of months, much talk has been repeated about Egyptian-Syrian contacts. Does his excellency the minister confirm this information?

Faruq al-Shar': No, there have been no Syrian-Egyptian contacts.

AL-TADAMUN: There has been talk in Damascus that Syria will take a stand against the Jordanian decision. How?

Faruq al-Shar': We believe that the Jordanian people and the Jordanian national movement play a big role in this cause and for that reason this step or what it is aimed at will produce some confrontation inevitably, through further contacts, and intensified contacts, between us and a large number of Arab countries.

AL-TADAMUN: Let us move over to the Maghreb. We would like to ask about Syria's refusal to welcome the declaration of union between Libya and Morocco to this point. How do you explain this position of yours?

Faruq al-Shar': The story is not one of welcoming or failing to welcome. We look at every political activity in the area from the angle of the extent to which it serves the basic cause, that is, the cause of the Arab-Israeli struggle. We measure things on this basis. We judge a matter to be positive if it is positive in the service of the Arab cause, and negative if it harms the cause. We have confidence in the Libyan leadership.

AL-TADAMUN: Do you consider that this union will serve the Arab confrontation with Israel?

Faruq al-Shar': We hope that that is how it will turn out.

AL-TADAMUN: Do the first signs which have appeared so far give adequate indication that that is how it will turn out?

Faruq al-Shar': Not much time has elapsed in this union.

AL-TADAMUN: There are people who consider in the light of the Libyan-Moroccan federation and Jordan's resumption of its relations with Egypt that the region seems to be venturing on a policy of axes.

Faruq al-Shar': We hope that this will not be the case. We believe that the Israeli enemy is a common enemy of the Arab nation and that it must be confronted along a very large, broad Arab front. The policy of axes has not and will not serve this goal; indeed, to the contrary, it will damage it. I am reminded now of an axis which was more serious than any other; I mean the axis comprising Iraq, Jordan and Egypt. This serious axis is not the product of this moment; it has been operating for some time, and we know that there is Egyptian-Iraqi coordination in all matters. There is no doubt that Yasir 'Arafat has been trying to follow this cavalcade for a substantial time. It has been clear since his visit to Cairo that he is in favor of the Camp David agreements and is also coordinating with Jordan in this context.

AL-TADAMUN: Are you worried, then, about an attempt to surround Syria?

Faruq al-Shar': We have great confidence that no one can surround us, and no one can isolate us.

AL-TADAMUN: Has thought been given to using force against the Jordanian plan?

Faruq al-Shar': We will use force only against the common enemy. We are sure that our alliances are greater than some people expect. It is true that there are a number of Arab parties that side with the United States and Israel, but we do not rule out the role of the Arab masses. In addition to that, there are many progressive regimes in the area and in the world. These matters are very important in regard to the issue of the Arab-Israeli struggle. We have seen how al-Sadat's regime was faced with Arab and international isolation following the visit to Jerusalem and the signing of the Camp David agreements. You can imagine, then, how Jordan's situation will be if it flings itself headlong into the Camp David scheme, or the framework of this scheme.

AL-TADAMUN: Could you identify for us the Arab countries which will not resume their relations with Egypt before the latter abrogates the Camp David agreements?

Faruq al-Shar': Many countries which are influential and have an effect in the region. There is no need to name names.

AL-TADAMUN: How do you evaluate the peace process in Lebanon under the aegis of the government of national unity?

Faruq al-Shar': We are optimistic regarding the success of the comprehensive security plan for Lebanon and the success of the political reforms. It is true that these will take some time, and some things will be disturbed. However, the security plans and the political reforms must succeed all in all, because we have no alternative. The Lebanese people have realized over 10 years of time that they will achieve salvation only through national reconciliation and the elimination of the roots of instability in Lebanon; whether these roots exist in some organizations or some laws, the essential point is that all the Lebanese must arrive at true political participation in management of Lebanese affairs, we are convinced. The Lebanese are working on this basis, and the private meetings which have taken place recently are in this context.

AL-TADAMUN: Some Lebanese parties are still opposed to the security plans. How do you consider this opposition can be dealt with?

Faruq al-Shar': I will tell you something definite: there are parties, or parts of parties, or some leaders in some parties, who do not want national reconciliation, security plans or anything else. Their interests have to a large extent become linked to the fragmentation of Lebanon. However, there is something stronger than these bodies, and that is the Lebanese people. Of course every group has a sort of standing with the Lebanese man in the street. These parties which can resort to upsetting conditions on the Lebanese street or to postponing the security plans and political reforms will lack any base among the people if they insist on obstructing these steps.

AL-TADAMUN: What if the foreign support for these groups continues?

Faruq al-Shar': Foreign support without any base among the people means nothing.

Jordanian Information Minister's Observations

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 78, 6 Oct 84 p 17

[Article by Najih Khalil]

[Text] Amman has returned to the spotlight by declaring its decision to resume diplomatic relations with Egypt. It is as if it was thereby placing events in a broad context which has scope for possible support, opposition and even enmity.

Jordan, whose officials' statements have proceeded to call for this step, can actually be considered one of the first Arab countries to hang a bell on the door of the resumption of diplomatic relations with Egypt.

Was this step something that arose suddenly, under its own circumstances, however, or was it a development that occurred in the case of a state of affairs which actually existed?

Jordanian Foreign [Ministry] sources told AL-TADAMUN:

"This step did not come about overnight. Rather, it had been germinating among the Jordanian leadership for a long time, and emerged as an appreciation on Amman's part of Egypt's position vis-a-vis Arab causes, especially the Gulf war, the events in Lebanon and the Palestinian cause."

The references which the sources in the Jordanian Foreign [Ministry] made in this regard are in fact totally compatible with what has been going on between Cairo and Amman the last 2 years. Jordanian and Egyptian government officials and diplomats have been exchanging visits over the past 2 years; a most recent visit to Cairo in this context was one which 'Adnan Abu 'Awdah, minister of the Jordanian court, made, in the course of which he met with the Egyptian president Husni Mubarak. At that time, the word circulated that the final touches on the decision to restore diplomatic relations between the two countries were made during that visit.

In addition, Cairo and Amman set out common foundations over the past 2 years for their positions concerning a number of issues related to the Arab-Israeli struggle, the Iraqi-Iranian war and the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. They revived a joint committee of economic cooperation.

As an extension of these common foundations, Amman and Cairo embraced the notion of holding an international conference to resolve the Middle East crisis, and each of them asked that the Soviet Union be included in efforts to seek a settlement to the crisis of the region.

The question now is, what are the probable implications of this step, which Jordanian officials, and a number of political observers along with them, determine was not a sudden one?

Will this step indeed be a beginning of Arab solidarity, or will it increase the intensity of the rifts in the Arab condition and add a new situation and new indications to the flavor, color and aroma of the divided, conflicting Arab axes?

Damascus, for its part, has considered the Jordanian step to be "a grievous situation," has said that it is studying ways of confronting it, and has requested an urgent meeting of Arab foreign ministers to discuss a resolution on a comprehensive Arab boycott of Jordan.

Other Arab parties, observing the direction of the movement of their political rhythm, seem to be waiting for basic features of this step to become clear before adopting direct positions on it.

Jordan, which carefully studied all the possible negative and positive developments of its decision, takes a different view of the situation from Damascus, which considers that this step entails a threat to the policy of polarization which it is pursuing in the area in the absence of Egyptian political influence. Jordan, which feels the dangers of the Syrian policy of polarization, is anxious to strengthen its relations with Cairo and at the same time to reintroduce Egypt's political influence in a manner which will limit or reduce the potential future developments in the Syrian polarization policy.

While Damascus considers that the Jordanian step entails an extension of the Camp David policy, Amman considers that it involves a departure from the situation which the Camp David agreements has established. In this regard, Layla Sharaf, the Jordanian minister of information, in an exclusive conversation with AL-TADAMUN, said:

"We have poured dirt on Camp David. Our position toward this issue was clear at the Baghdad summit. In reality, the resumption of diplomatic and political relations with our brother Egypt does not mean that we accept the Camp David agreements. We have resumed relations on the basis of Egypt's new positions and orientations and, while it is true that Egypt is connected to Camp David, we cannot ask it to abandon Camp David, because that will bring problems from the international, security and economic standpoints. Rather, we will content ourselves with knowing that Egypt's spirit is no longer that of Camp David, that Egypt has regained its Arab spirit and that its orientation and inclination are once again interacting with the Arab nation's causes. I would like to point out, on this occasion, in the process of talking about Camp David, that the Sultanate of Oman did not sever its diplomatic relations with Egypt, and, although the Sultanate of Oman is a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council, no one blamed it as much as we are being blamed now as we try to meet Egypt halfway in order to bring it back to Arab ranks."

In the face of the intensified conflict between Damascus and Amman which observers expect will follow this step, the possibilities that a Jordanian-Syrian struggle might break out seem close at hand, in the light of repeated Syrian threats against Amman.

In a speech he delivered to the Jordanian Chambers of Deputies and Prominent Persons last Monday (1 October 1984), King Husayn responded to these threats by saying "The positions of opposition to the step of restoring relations with Egypt respond to the enemy's aspirations of weakening the Arab body and consecrating the state of imminent collapse and paralysis the Arab nation is experiencing in these circumstances."

He also said, "My government decided to resume full diplomatic relations with Egypt out of its appreciation for Egypt's international role and out of appreciation for the Arab people of Egypt and their sacrifices and martyrs."

In an indirect reply to the Syrian statement, the Jordanian monarch said, in his speech, that he rejected the latest Israeli invitation to negotiate and considered it another attempt at deception and delusion. He said that the conditions which accompanied the invitation, the formation of the Israeli government and the Israelis' tendencies, which became clear in the recent elections, all indicate the lack of seriousness of the invitation, because the criterion of seriousness lies in moving toward peace on the basis of commitment to international Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, which calls for the holding of an international peace conference under the aegis of the United Nations.

King Husayn declared before the deputies and prominent figures that regardless of circumstances, conditions and events, he would never abandon a grain of soil on the Bank, Gaza or Golan.

Although King Husayn's reply was quiet in comparison with the asperity of the Syrian threats, some observers in the Jordanian capital go so far as to believe that the Jordanian-Syrian borders will witness extreme tension in the next few days or weeks, especially since news has been circulating in Amman to the effect that 30,000 Syrian troops have started to be massed on Jordan's northern borders.

Egyptian Minister Describes Step

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 78, 6 Oct 84 p 18

[Article by Ihsan Bakr]

[Text] In a comment he made on the Jordanian decision to resume full diplomatic relations with Egypt, Dr Butrus Ghali, Egyptian minister of state for foreign affairs, declared, in a statement to AL-TADAMUN:

"The resumption of relations comes as an affirmation of Egypt's historic relations with its Arab brothers. Hopes are now being revived that an Arab strategy and new Arab movement will be established. The resumption of relations does not confirm the invalidity of the Egyptian and Jordanian positions but it does stress the importance of common Arab action, especially since the resumption of Egyptian-Jordanian relations opens the door to new Arab diplomatic movement."

While the decision to resume full diplomatic and political relations between Jordan and Egypt has surprised most Arab capitals, some of these capitals which have strong bonds with the Hashemite family realized that King Husayn would embark on a step of this kind; however, they did not realize the final date the Jordanian monarch had specified for carrying out his decision, and therefore one can say that everyone was surprised by the decision.

Cairo was informed of the decision in quasi-official fashion when the minister of court, 'Adnan Abu 'Awdah, came on a sudden visit to Egypt, where he met with President Husni Mubarak. The Jordanian official touched on the subject with President Mubarak indirectly at that time, speaking about the need to restore Arab solidarity and Jordan's sense of the degree of danger which faced the Arab nation while Egypt was absent. He emphasized the need for Egypt to return to Arab ranks. At this point, as informed diplomatic sources told AL-TADAMUN, President Mubarak said that Cairo's position was well known. It constantly called for unity of ranks, but at the same time did not want to cause any country any embarrassment. Egypt welcomed the resumption of its relations with Arab brothers at a time of their own choosing, proceeding from their own particular circumstances. 'Adnan Abu 'Awdah then went back to Amman and submitted his report to King Husayn, leaving it up to the Jordanian monarch to choose a suitable time to announce the decision. Three weeks ago, when AL-TADAMUN met with the Egyptian foreign minister, Dr 'Isamat 'Abd-al-Majid, I asked him about the issue of the resumption of Arab relations with Egypt. He answered me with his customary diplomatic style: "We welcome the restoration of relations with any Arab country." He then directly spoke about the excellent cooperation which existed between Egypt and both Jordan and Iraq. He said that Egyptian-Jordanian and Egyptian-Iraqi

relations constituted a model which had to be emulated. At the end of my meeting with the chief of Egyptian diplomacy, I proceeded to ask him, "However, you did not give me an explicit answer on the resumption of relations." He smiled and told me, "Review your conversation with me and you will learn the answer. The developments of the days to come will give proof of that."

In addition to that, AL-TADAMUN has learned that Jordan made contacts with some Arab capitals concerning the resumption of Egyptian-Arab relations and the need to have Egypt regain its position. At that time the response was concentrated on two points in particular: the first was that there was no argument that it was necessary that Egypt return, while the second concerned the means for announcing the decision to restore relations. That was the reply which King Husayn himself heard from more than one Arab leader with whom he met. There was almost unanimous agreement, but the issue concerned the timing and announcement of the decision. Meanwhile, the Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat held consultations with more than one Arab capital for the sake of restoring order to Arab ranks, and he heard the same things the Jordanian monarch had heard from the Arab leaders with whom he met, in terms of agreement over the necessity that [Egypt] return, though one should wait for the appropriate time for the process of producing the decision. Finally, the visit by the Jordanian minister of court to Cairo and his return to Amman took place. At that time, a report was issued by Sa'id Kamal, member of the Palestinian National Council, to Yasir 'Arafat in Tunisia, stating that Jordan had decided to resume its relations with Cairo and that the matter would be decided in a few days, though the report did not specify the date. This decision was made by King Husayn himself, who got in contact by telephone with President Mubarak the eve of the announcement of the decision. At this point a question arises: Why did the timing occur on that specific day?

There is more than one reason. Some of the reasons are objective and some are related to protocol. More than other Arab leaders, the Jordanian monarch is aware of the magnitude of the sufferings the people in the towns of the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip are going through. He knows all the details of the daily sufferings of the Palestinian people who are under Israeli occupation. Moreover, King Husayn also knows, from broad experience over the 32 years in which he has been responsible for governing the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, that any solution to the Middle East issue and the issue of the Palestinian people in particular must touch upon fundamental parties -- the Liberation Organization, Jordan, Egypt and Syria. King Husayn also realizes that Syria has reached an almost complete rupture with the Liberation Organization as embodied in the person of its leader Yasir 'Arafat and he realizes how difficult if not impossible it would be to create any kind of understanding or common ground between the Syrian and Palestinian leaders after all that has happened in Lebanon, in particular Tripoli.

More than one observer in Cairo considers that Syria is opposed to the Jordanian step on the basis of its own calculations, which are totally removed from any notion that has been agreed upon in the Arab context in general for rearranging the conditions of the confrontation states as part of a strategy to cope with the situation. Because a struggle to defend its territory has been imposed on Iraq, for its part, therefore no confrontation states exist

except Jordan, Egypt and the organization, and it is necessary to change the picture completely in order to regain the reins of Arab initiative in coping with future developments. The reins of the initiative can be acquired only by bringing Egypt back immediately, without any delay.

In addition, from the standpoint of protocol, the Jordanian decision was made in order to prepare for an extremely important visit which Prince Hassan, the crown prince of Jordan, will make on the 20th of this month to Egypt, to hold working meetings with President Mubarak. Egypt is preparing now, in the official framework and the framework of the people, to receive the lofty Jordanian official; more than one observer believes that the visit will be a preparation for a bilateral summit between President Mubarak and King Husayn in Jordan in the next few weeks. When AL-TADAMUN asked him about his view of the resumption of relations with Egypt, a high level Jordanian diplomatic official said "Our relations with Egypt were never severed at all. Moreover, we know very well that Egyptian-Arab meetings are taking place constantly, so why should some people react if we ourselves venture to take the proper decision? The recent decision came about not just in the interests of Egypt or Jordan but also in the interests of the Arab cause, and on top of all that in the interests of the Palestinian cause."

Moroccan Attitude Toward Resumption

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 78, 6 Oct 84 p 19

[Article by Abu Bakr al-Sadiq al-Sharif]

[Text] The least that can be said with regard to the Jordanian decision to restore relations with Egypt is that the overall paralysis on the Arab stage has been broken and that the Arab-African Federation reached by Morocco and Libya has faced its first difficult test.

The Libyans greeted the decision with obvious agitation, condemning the Jordanian step and demanding that Jordan be expelled from the Arab League, while the Moroccans kicked a sudden summit into the goal of the Arab nation and the king of Morocco sent a number of emissaries to Arab capitals to invite the Arab presidents and kings to hold a summit conference in Morocco to study the Jordanian step thoroughly and prevent the heated reactions which it provoked from developing.

Observers noted this obvious difference in the reactions of the two countries in the Arab-African Federations with much equanimity; the wary silence which Morocco had observed for 3 days, during which much gossip circulated in Moroccan milieux, was dissipated. In general, the gossip involved a possibility that Morocco would emulate Libya, in order to protect the good health of the federal embryo from the fluctuations in the Arab political climate, which was surprised by the Jordanian step the moment it came to light.

Well-informed Moroccan circles ruled out this possibility, on grounds that just as theories on the objective situation have become widespread, Hassan the Second's positions have always continued to be calculated with the

utmost care. They have also in the way they have been presented been characterized by a moderation which has distanced Morocco from touchy feelings in the Arab East and has enabled him to retain his options to be the arbiter of the family and the person who calls on it to meet and bring its ranks closer together.

The subject of the Moroccan call for this summit has, as is clear, been compatible with the substance of this analysis. Indeed, it has gone beyond it by showing the nature of the convictions the king of Morocco entertains vis-a-vis the federation between his country and Libya, which he summarized in the exclusive interview he gave last week to the American newspaper THE NEW YORK TIMES. He said that the federation treaty between Morocco and Libya was not a union or a confederate union, or even a merger along the lines of what Col al-Qadhdhafi had sought to realize with other Arab countries, but rather that he had failed in that, stressing that the matter of the federation does not go beyond limited cooperation and consultations between the two countries. He also said in response to another question related to his relationship with al-Qadhdhafi that his relationship with him might prompt the latter to evince greater moderation.

On the basis of all this, more than one observer has noted that Morocco's call for the convening of an Arab summit put more than one bird in his basket with a single shot, namely:

First, it eliminated the state of embarrassment in which the Arab-African Federation could have become caught up.

Second, it stressed Morocco's concern to exploit its strategic decision, along with the concern to keep its tactical issues far from potentially explosive minefields.

Third, it declared cogently that since it was Morocco that had played a vital role at the Casablanca Islamic conference to bring Egypt back to its Arab family, Morocco would not relinquish its pioneering role in the framework of this family.

Fourth, a Moroccan affirmation that Moroccan soil and Moroccan techniques of management are best able to make Arab summits succeed and impart the character of unanimity to their resolutions.

Fifth, in their bilateral relations many Arab countries, including Morocco, will be granted an opportunity to mend fences which individual actions after the recent Fez summit had battered.

Aside from all that, the proposed summit will provide many benefits depending on the cleverness of people who follow developments on the Arab stage. However, the urgent, disturbing question is, will this summit meet or not?

Well informed Moroccan sources have said that there is more than one chance that this summit can be made to succeed. In their estimation, Hassan the Second through his jurisdiction as chairman of the last Arab summit meeting, must have held a series of consultations with a number of Arab brothers

who are linked to Morocco by bonds of affection and mutual understanding and met with the early signs of a response to the invitation from them. Foremost among these, according to these sources, is the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which he believes he has found is close to endorsement of the recommendation which, among other things, concerns purifying the Arab atmosphere and adopting a unanimous position vis-a-vis the basic cause, which has played a vital part regarding the series of postponements that has plagued the Riyadh summit. In the view of these circles, the Saudi endorsement of the Moroccan summit does not of course concern it alone; indeed, it is probable that it will go beyond the Gulf countries and reduce all likely obstacles posed by Syria, Algeria and South Yemen, since the success of the Morocco summit will mean preparations in favor of the holding of the Riyadh summit which it is believed will be postponed but not cancelled.

In the context of these circumstances, since calculations in the field are not like calculations on the threshing floor, the two Arab-African Federation countries have advanced the measures. Last 27 September Abdelouahed Radi was appointed secretary general of the federation. In addition, the city of Fez witnessed the signing of a Moroccan-Libyan agreement governing security issues and the movement of persons which is supposed to go into effect 2 weeks after the exchange of the documents concerned with the conclusion of this agreement. It stipulates that the two countries that signed it are to undertake to enable the citizens of their countries to enter each other's territories, move about, reside, work and engage in tourist activity, with the freedom to leave guaranteed as long as there are no legal obstacles.

Article Two eliminates entry visas between the two countries, on condition that the citizens of the federation have obtained valid travel documents.

In Section Three, federal citizens [of each country] have been given the right to engage in work activities in the other country unless those activities are forbidden or restricted to the people of that country in accordance with the laws in effect.

In Section Four, federal citizens have been given the right to own real estate and have been guaranteed all forms of transactions in each of the two countries, on condition that laws on levies, taxes, revenues and bonds which are in effect be honored.

Section Five sets out the law that the property citizens of each of the two contracting parties own in the country of the other party may not be appropriated except for the sake of public works, in accordance with the laws. Section Six gives the two parties the right to prevent any subject of the other country from entering, residing and settling on their territory and removing him from it for security considerations, whether they are external or internal.

Palestinians Comment on Resumption

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 78, 6 Oct 84 pp 20, 21

[Article by 'Ali al-Khalili]

[Text] The Jordanian government's decision to resume diplomatic relations with Egypt has provoked broad reactions in the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip. These reactions bore on the reaffirmation of the central Palestinian position, which stipulates that Arab relations with Egypt must inevitably be restored as long as Egypt alienates itself from the Camp David schemes and stresses its adherence to the national rights of the Palestinian people and their legitimate leadership as embodied in the Palestine Liberation Organization.

In statements to AL-TADAMUN, a number of figures in the occupied territories have declared their positions on this matter clearly. Hilmi Hannun, mayor of Tulkaram, said, "The resumption of relations between Jordan and Egypt is a sound step. This step ought to have been taken by the Arab countries as represented by the Arab League." He said, "We support Egypt's return to the Arab world; it is the greatest of the Arab countries that have stood alongside our Palestinian cause. We would also have liked the decision to have been taken by the Arab League by a majority." The lawyer Zuhayr al-Rayyis, from Gaza, said, "Camp David was not and will not be something that is in the interests of the Arabs or in the interests of us Palestinians specifically, but that was not the case as far as the rupture with Egypt went and it will not be something that is in the interests of the Arabs or the Palestinians specifically. To that end, I welcome the wise step of restoring diplomatic relations with Egypt."

Bassam al-Shak'ah, the elected mayor of Nabulus, said, "It is unfortunate that a unilateral step should be taken to restore relations with Egypt, because the regime in Egypt still declares its ties with Camp David. This indicates an escalation in the policy of Arab alliances and conflicts." However, Ilyas Furayj, the mayor of Bethlehem, said "It is a wise step and a good decision, and a service to Arab interests and Palestinian interests in particular." In addition, Rashshad al-Shawa, mayor of Gaza, asserted his "support for the resumption of Jordanian-Egyptian relations" and demanded "the restoration of relations between all Arab countries and Egypt."

Mustafa al-Natshah, the elected mayor of Hebron, said, "With this step, an end is being put to the lax character of Arab positions toward our cause and Arab solidarity is being restored once again." Mr Anwar Nusaybah, chairman of the board of the Jerusalem Electric Company, said, "It is very natural that relations should be restored between two Arab countries, but that does not mean that Jordan has accepted Egypt's policy as far as Camp David goes." Hanna Sanyura, the responsible editor of AL-FAJR newspaper, considered "We are entering a new and decisive stage in inter-Arab relations, and the Jordanian step to restore relations with Egypt should be considered a wise, bold one, especially since the effects of the bitter struggle we have been suffering from on the Palestinian stage in the wake of Yasir 'Arafat's visit to Cairo have not been put behind us yet. Moreover, the straightening of

relations between Arab countries must take place in accordance with the political platform which these countries follow and its effect on Arab solidarity and the Palestinian cause. The current Egyptian policy is totally different from the Camp David approach. Egyptian efforts, for example, are now meshing with the Palestinian and Arab approach that the most viable way to resolve the Palestinian-Israeli struggle is to support the convening of an international conference with the participation of all the parties concerned, including of course the Palestine Liberation Organization."

Concerning this step, the journalist Raymondah Tawil in Jerusalem stated "It is a positive step along the road to the restoration of Arab solidarity in general and rectification of the disturbance which Egypt's departure from Arab ranks has caused."

The lawyer Jamil 'Uthman Nasir of Jericho said, "If this step of Jordan's will ultimately end up serving Arab solidarity, in particular the Palestinian cause, we will be in favor of it, certainly."

The lawyer Ibrahim Abu Sittah, chairman of the executive committee of the conference on refugees, said, "This step confirms that matters between two Arab countries that have a direct link with the Palestinian cause have returned to their normal state. We hope that relations among the three groups, the Palestine Liberation Organization, Jordan and Egypt, will be strengthened in a manner that will pave the way for a just resolution to the Palestinian cause."

Finally, it should be pointed out that the reaction of the Arab man on the street in the occupied territories is characterized by an attitude of hopefulness toward anything that will have the effect of eliminating the nightmare of many years of occupation.

Tunisian Palestinians Refuse Comment

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 78, 6 Oct 84 pp 20, 21

[Text] The reactions by the Palestinian leaders in Tunisia to the restoration of diplomatic relations between Egypt and Jordan could be put under a large heading, "abstention from comment." Many Palestinian figures whom AL-TADAMUN had asked about their position on the initiative of the resumption of relations between Cairo and Amman preferred not to reply to the question at the present time or expressed their opinion unofficially and asked that their names not be mentioned.

In explaining the phenomenon of the failure to declare explicit positions toward the Jordanian decision, a source close to the FATAH central committee pointed out that the members of the FATAH command did not want to get into a new dispute with Abu 'Ammar like the one which occurred after Abu 'Ammar's visit to Cairo.

The source added that 'Arafat's presence in Amman, starting the day after the restoration of relations, and his repeated meetings with King Husayn would mean that any statement against Jordan which any member of the central

committee made would subject that member personally to embarrassment. The source went on to say that the FATAH leaders were afraid that in the event a new dispute broke out between themselves and 'Arafat, Abu 'Ammar would tell them what he said after the visit to Cairo: "Carry out the policy of the central committee and I will carry out Abu 'Ammar's policy." Another Palestinian source commented on the Jordanian decision by saying, "This decision is the first step in the revival of the Reagan plan, and the reactions which some Palestinian mayors who are well known for their strong ties with the Jordanian government, such as Ilyas Furayj and Rashad al-Shawwa, have expressed are only proof that the Palestinian wing of the Reagan scheme is being put in motion, while preparations are being made to bring up the subject of autonomy for the Palestinians once again." This source considered that the nationalist response to this current supporting American policy came in the words of Bassam al-Shak'ah, who condemned the resumption of relations. The Palestinian source added that this decision to resume relations was connected to the American elections, since President Reagan was anxious to collect as many cards as possible in order to guarantee himself a victory in [yet] more states, and one of the winning cards in his hand, in which the plan that bears his name constitutes the hub and the backbone, was that of the Middle East. In the source's opinion, the resumption of relations between Jordan and Egypt is a preparatory step to the reintroduction of the plan.

Whatever the validity of this analysis might be, the tendency within the Palestinian leadership in Tunisia following the Jordanian decision can be summarized by two types of reactions. The first supports this decision, on grounds that it will help bring Egypt back to Arab ranks and will encourage the advancement of the limited positive initiatives which President Mubarak has taken since his assumption of power. The people who hold this view hope that the other Arab countries will be encouraged to follow Jordan's steps in order to reaffirm Egypt's return to the Arabs, compel it to proceed in accordance with a new policy and end its estrangement from Arab ranks. This view is expressive of the opinion of the leaders and the staff supporting them in Tunisia. Numerous Palestinian sources say that Abu 'Ammar heads this approach. The second group considers that the Kuwaiti and Saudi reactions are the soundest positions vis-a-vis the Jordanian decision. The leaders who hold this view reiterate that there is nothing to prevent Egypt from returning to Arab ranks and that the restoration of relations is not to be rejected in itself, but that the method the Jordanian government has pursued opens the door to individual initiatives and a reassessment of all the collective decisions the Arab summits have taken, which is not of help in getting out of the schism the Arabs are going through now, and will not permit serious binding decisions in the future.

Saudis Offer Neutral Response

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 78, 6 Oct 84 p 21

[Text] The paragraphs in the official Saudi statement issued Thursday evening 27 September regarding Jordan's decision to resume diplomatic relations with Egypt were not a surprise to any observer in Riyadh, since the paragraphs in the statement reflected the general conclusions of a group of the

kingdom's positions on issues concerning the Arab nation, with the kingdom always stressing its concern with and commitment to Arab summit resolutions, hoping at the same time that all Arab countries will pursue this road, which will in effect preserve a minimum of Arab consensus.

Although the statement underlined that Egypt had "extreme importance, great weight and good role on the Arab stage," it paralleled that with the statement that "The kingdom affirms its continued adherence to and respect for Arab summit resolutions and thus sanctifies its well known political principles, which proceed from its permanent concern for a unity of Arab ranks based on unanimity of decisions."

Informed sources described the statement to AL-TADAMUN as clear, wise and calm. They considered that a country that has the weight of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on all planes and is supposed to be playing host to the Arab summit conference in a few weeks will not bless any isolated step any Arab country takes because it, that is, the kingdom, is more aware than others of the results which could arise from individual steps which will in effect increase the state of fragmentation the Arab nation is experiencing.

In addition, observers have noted that the kingdom's position, as expressed by this statement, was characterized by an indirect tone of chastisement of Jordan's decree, especially because of the timing which, more than one observer considered, could disrupt unremitting efforts to provide a minimum Arab reconciliation before the summit is held. However, this chastisement "does not mean diminishing the kingdom's devotion to the return of Egypt, and does not mean diminishing its appreciation of the sound line which President Husni Mubarak has been following with his Arab brothers in all his foreign policies, which is the subject of praise and appreciation," according to the contents of the Saudi statement.

However, none of these justifications, if it is permissible to consider them such, can take precedence over the kingdom's basic well known principles along with its permanent efforts and concern for the unity of Arab ranks through its commitment to the resolutions issued by the summit conferences.

In addition, more than one observer in Riyadh has noted that the Saudi media, in the form of the press and the radio, treated the Jordanian step of resuming relations with Egypt in a highly unprovocative manner; except for the daily newspaper AL-NADWAH, none of the daily papers in the kingdom commented negatively or positively on the event, contenting themselves with reaffirming the contents of the official Saudi statement. The newspaper AL-NADWAH treated the event with a comment that appeared in an editorial it devoted to this purpose which was characterized by a position of sorts, on the basis of which the newspaper said "If the statement by the official source was made as a commentary on an Arab decision which has actually been made, one hopes that this conduct will not be the first of similar measures taken in the absence of consensus, by the person who took the first decision or others, because Arab solidarity is still more important and has a broader effect than any conduct or measures."

Various Gulf Leaders Comment

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 78, 6 Oct 84 pp 22, 23

[Text] With a sudden, unexpected move, King Husayn has created a tremendous political uproar in the Middle East and has changed the configuration of the Arab arena by his decision to resume diplomatic relations with Egypt.

The Jordanian decision makes it mandatory that all the parties concerned with the Middle East crisis hasten to investigate the background to the Jordanian monarch's rapid shift from the ranks of the people opposed to the Camp David policy to what some political sources have interpreted as "a delayed declaration of an acceptance" of it.

The Jordanian step, which Arab political circles have considered a surprise, because it took place without forewarning, offers more than one item of proof that intensified secret contacts concerning it were made recently between Amman and Cairo on the one hand and between Amman and the Arab countries on the other.

Mr Tahir al-Misri, the Jordanian foreign minister, confirmed the accuracy of this information in his interview with AL-TADAMUN published in this issue.

However, at this stage the real surprise is the timing, considering that the Jordanian step will impose new facts on an Arab arena which is not capable of tolerating and assimilating them at the present time; on top of that, they could lead to a sort of confusion in Arab ranks in which positions are shifted and positions emerge.

The Arab reactions have varied from condemnation and denunciation to support and silence. The most conspicuous of these reactions was the statement issued by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which was formulated in a tone that expressed obvious reservations over the Jordanian step, especially in the paragraph which said, "If it appears to any fraternal Arab country that a decision or amendment should be made which is harmonious with the public interest regarding any political, economic or social matter, it must pick up consultation with its brothers at an Arab summit which it will call for to present its case and explain its view, in order to guarantee that the commitments spelled out in the resolutions of the Arab summits are preserved."

People who read the Saudi statement observed immediately that the kingdom did not object to having relations with Egypt restored at the proper time so much as to the individual nature by which the decision to restore [these relations] had been made outside the Arab consensus. Most Arab countries in general and Gulf countries in particular support this orientation.

In addition, more than one observer has considered that the Saudi statement directly answers statements being circulated to the effect that the Jordanian decision was preceded by consultations and contacts with Arab countries. Just because such consultations were held, with Saudi Arabia specifically, does not mean that the latter approved of the isolated Jordanian action, and this provides an answer to a number of observations, most

significantly the one that holds that King Husayn is not an adventurous type and does not like political surprises and gives the impression that a joint Arab decision on resuming relations with Egypt was taken at some time and that it was left up to each Arab country to choose the time that it found appropriate.

Because of the Jordanian action's direct effect on the Gulf area, a Gulf source interpreted Jordan's step to AL-TADAMUN as fleeing from peace by embracing it, in the sense that Jordan, which in the coming period will be the target of two Israeli campaigns, for peace and war, has chosen the right timing to provide it with a political cover, at least, to convince the United States that it is ready for the latter's peace initiative.

This source added that King Husayn took his decision as an attempt on his part to defuse the series of surprises which the international stage had witnessed in the past 2 weeks, as embodied in the Gromyko-Reagan, Gromyko-Shamir, Shamir-'Abd-al-Majid and Murphy-al-Asad meetings, then the dynamic French activity in the area and finally the new circumstances on the Gulf, Palestinian and Lebanese stages.

It is not true, the source went on to say, that the Jordanian monarch resorted to the Egyptian option to strengthen his military position vis-a-vis Israel, because if that had been his intention he ought to have opened a line with Syria, not with Egypt, since the former represents the military center of gravity in the confrontation with Israel while the latter represents the political center of gravity, to which one turns for the peaceful solutions.

This Gulf interpretation is compatible with a number of Western analyses which consider that the Jordanian step, "by its political nature," is aimed at dealing with the Israeli gambit embodied in the "Jordanian option." The Egypt of Camp David can offer Jordan the necessary cover if it decides to proceed with a peaceful solution.

However, if the step is "military by nature," it will be aimed at forestalling any military option that Israel might resort to to impose the "Jordanian option." In addition, the resumption of relations with Egypt will give Jordan broader scope to act, through a confrontation with Egypt, since Jordan wants to make Israel understand that the resumption of relations with Egypt is based on its preference for a peaceful solution regarding what one could describe as the beginning of a complicated, difficult process whose stage is likely to be the entire Middle East.

Gulf circles which had been watching closely and were amazed by the Jordanian decision registered the following observations:

Yasir 'Arafat acted properly by not commenting on the Jordanian decision to restore relations with Egypt, although the Jordanian decision is concerned primarily with the Palestinian situation, since the circles to be set off by the stone Jordan threw into the Arab lake will be large and growing but will produce violent currents underneath its surface and in its depths which will directly affect the course of Palestinian action in the coming period.

However, 'Arafat should be chastized for going to Amman directly after the Jordanian decision. Some people might interpret this as a Palestinian declaration of allegiance to the Jordanian initiative. In addition, the timing of 'Arafat's presence in Amman, coinciding with the presence of the American emissary Richard Murphy, can also be explained as a blessing on 'Arafat's part of the efforts of the American intermediary and this adds force to accusations by people opposed to the chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization that he is trying for a political deal with Jordan, America and Egypt in order to initiate a second stage of the Camp David policy.

While the Syrian response to the Jordanian decision was violent, as was expected, a calm view of the matter from all angles will encourage one to conclude that Syria has no interests at the present time in closing the doors of Damascus to 'Arafat.

This is because, if we assume that the Jordanian decision is primarily concerned with the Palestinian issue and not with Syria, it would be more fitting for the Syrian regime to "program" its opposition to the Jordanian approach by way of the Palestinians. This makes it mandatory that it cooperate with 'Arafat rather than provoking and isolating him, especially since more than one observer considers that the Jordanian decision has forced 'Arafat into a corner and subjected Palestinian action to a new political quandary, and that the shock of Jordan's political move could make it possible for 'Arafat to emerge from his current paralysis through Palestinian action by playing the card of the peaceful solution, since military and organizational action has been paralyzed -- while, however, intensively calculating the risks which might arise from such an orientation, since the chairman of the Liberation Organization will find himself forced to resort to one of two options:

Either to take a gamble on riding the caravan of the settlement to get Jordan to join Camp David, with the concomitant rifts within Palestinian ranks, or to refrain from that and ensure that the Syrian doors will open up to him again -- bearing in mind that that will put him in the ranks of the people opposed to the settlement, will cause him to be exposed, to the exclusion of others, and will make him a target of the surgical operation which is being prepared for the region.

The question these circles which are closely watching have raised is, will the results and repercussions of the Jordanian decision to resume relations with Egypt be as great as the results and repercussions that resulted from Egypt's policy at Camp David?

In other words, will the Arabs' position vis-a-vis Jordan resemble the position the Arabs held vis-a-vis Egypt, and still do?

The Arab reactions which followed in succession after the Jordanian decision provide an affirmative answer, but that does not prevent one from admitting that the first pawn was moved after King Husayn ventured to extend his hand to President Mubarak, and it remains to be learned who will follow him.

Lebanese Sources Expect Blowup

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 78, 6 Oct 84 p 23

[Article by Ibrahim al-Burjawi]

[Text] Informed sources in the Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs have expressed great worry over the repercussions Jordan's decision to restore diplomatic relations with Egypt will have on the Lebanese stage and fear that there will be a collapse and a retreat from the positive steps this area has recently witnessed as far as advancing the Lebanese crisis toward a proper solution is concerned.

These sources ascribe the reasons for their fear to the custom requiring that all disputes which occur among Arabs concerning all important issues be automatically reflected on the Lebanese stage as a struggle among the people holding the dispute; on top of that, the Jordanian step reshuffles the Lebanese cards and the positions of the Lebanese regime, especially as regards the Syrian option which Lebanon had decided to take following the cancellation of the 17 May agreement with Israel and its alienation from the American solution, which Damascus had considered an execution of the Camp David policy -- which is how it has also classified the Jordanian decision regarding the restoration of its diplomatic relations with Egypt.

It is well known that the Lebanese crisis had recently witnessed positive movement toward positive action, especially following the trip by Richard Murphy, the American assistant secretary of state, to the area, and the campaign of proposals calling for a Syrian-Israeli understanding over an Israeli withdrawal from the territory it is occupying in exchange for security arrangements which would delegate an effective role to the international forces.

The trip by Prime Minister Rashid Karami and the minister Nabih Birri to the United Nations, and the talks they held there, occurred in this framework. There is no doubt that an Israeli withdrawal will constitute the first practical step toward the resolution of the Lebanese crisis, but the surprise Jordanian move has caused Lebanese decisionmaking circles to entertain new doubts regarding the new course the crisis in the region, to which the crisis in Lebanon is connected, might assume. This has impelled these circles to postpone making the final decisions these circles have been facing in the course of their discussions of a number of crucial issues, especially in the meetings of the Council of Ministers and the ministers' retreats.

Therefore, there has been a postponement in the discussion of all security and political issues, and each party has held to its position and failed to offer any of the concessions which had been anticipated, consequently preferring to bear up and wait to learn about the true nature of the developments in the region. This situation could continue until after the American presidential elections.

In this regard, the minister of Public Works, Transport and of Tourism, Walid Junblat, has made a statement to the effect that the Council of Ministers' retreats and the meetings devoted to

the discussion of issues which are under dispute among Lebanese might drag out until his son Taymur (4 years of age) and the president's two sons Pierre and Sami (6 and 7) reach manhood and attend these retreats.

In this interim, everything remains as it was in Lebanon, in the sense that it will continue to experience a state of no solutions and at the same time there will be no attenuation of the crisis, especially from the security standpoint. In light of this situation, the factional and doctrinal disputes will continue to a degree whose likes Lebanon has not witnessed previously, to the point where the Council of Ministers, when it appointed an acting premier during the absence of Rashid Karami, chose Dr Salim al-Huss (a Sunnite), in place of Nabih Birri chose 'Adil 'Usayran (the Shiite) and in place of Camille Chamoun chose Joseph al-Hashim (a Maronite), while the custom, for example, would have been to choose Camille Chamoun to take the place of Rashid Karami.

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ECONOMY MINISTER, CURRENCY DEALERS CLASH

London AL-TADAMIN in Arabic No 75, 15 Sep 84 pp 13-14

[Article by Ihsan Bakr: "Currency Mafia Demands Head of Minister"]

[Text] Why all this outcry around Dr Mustafa al-Sa'id, the Egyptian minister of economy? And is everything that is rumored true, that he will leave the government at the first change? Then what is the background of the battle between him and the currency dealers? In this inquiry we will try to answer these questions. We begin with statements made by Dr Mustafa al-Sa'id to AL-TADAMIN in which he said:

"No matter what happens, I will not submit my resignation from my post, and no matter what happens, I will not abandon my policy, which is aimed at protecting the national economy, regulating banking activity, and restricting dealings in the free currency market. No matter what happens, I will not waver in controlling currency dealings, that suspicious connection, and the unholy alliance among the merchant monarchs, the money brokers and some bankers who are allied with them. Despite anything that happens I will not be pushed into resigning. I am fully prepared for a confrontation at any place and any time. I am certainly not above being questioned, but I have the right to ask questions: What is the charge and what is the evidence? Whoever has evidence for his charges must present it immediately, without delay. They are trying to mar my image before public opinion, and after I have put all of them in the prisoner's dock they are now trying to damage my reputation and that of my family. But I will not resign. And if you ask why I don't resign, I will say that when I took the recent economic steps, I took them believing in a cause, and my resignation now would mean surrender to those individuals who are actually the "Mafia," and my resignation would tell them they are unopposed."

This is the position of Dr Mustafa al-Sa'id, Egyptian minister of economy, who has, alone, plunged into an intensely vicious battle against those who are described in Egyptian economic circles as "currency dealers, brokers, open-door sharks, fences, and the quick, illegally rich."

There is in the socialist public prosecutor's office an extensive file of hundreds of pages, all of which pertain to the matter of trade in currency and investigations of some of the bankers dealing with the traders.

The investigations of the socialist prosecutor have included everything. But in the files of the investigation it is established that there has been no questioning of the minister of economy. But it is established that the name of the minister of economy came up in the investigations.

When the viciousness of the campaign intensified sources in the "Mafia" of the currency dealers began saying the minister of economy had been in touch with the investigation of himself. Some of the opposition press in Egypt stated this unequivocally. So the office of the socialist prosecutor hastened to issue an official report stating that there was no investigation of the minister of economy. Despite this, the campaign against the minister continues. The rumors are many and they come from more than one direction. Letters are now being exchanged between the office of the socialist prosecutor, Prime Minister Kamal Hasan 'Ali, and Minister of Economy Dr Mustafa al-Sa'id. Some of this correspondence has been shown to the president of the Republic.

Mustafa al-Sa'id himself wrote an exhaustive letter rebutting all the charges or rumors and submitted it to the prime minister, especially since the rumors did not stop with the man himself, but reached into his home, charging his wife with dealings and saying that it was the duty of the minister of economy, having accepted his post, to stop his wife from her dealing activity, particularly since she is active in a sector that is under the supervision and control of her husband.

Despite the official assurances issued by the socialist prosecutor's office, despite the statement of President Mubarak himself, and despite the fact that the minister of economy is, thus far, exercising his powers, rumors are still flooding the political sector as well as financial, economic, and banking circles, that the minister will leave the cabinet in the first ministerial change announced by the government of Kamal Hasal 'Ali. Some say the minister will leave his post in October, and some say he will be obliged eventually to submit his resignation.

The story of the hot encounter with the "Mafia" of the currency dealers, as Mustafa al-Sa'id himself calls them, began about a year ago. In August of 1983 Minister of Economy Mustafa al-Sa'id closed the accounts of 55 dealers. He maintained that they were using these accounts in exchange dealing in speculating on the value of the Egyptian pound and raising the prices of the other, foreign currencies in an exaggerated fashion, particularly the dollar, thus harming the framework of the Egyptian economy.

Among these dealers are seven influential persons who have had their way in setting the prices that they want and in controlling the flow of remittances, such as the savings of Egyptians abroad, the official estimate of which varies between 3 and 10 billion dollars.

The greatest danger from this is that the influence of these seven persons has permeated and extended into some elements of the banking system in serious fashion.

The minister of economy recognizes that the currency dealers did not achieve this magnitude of strength without some of the banks inappropriately aiding and supporting their activity. Some of these dealers, most of whom were nothing more than a mere instructor, community expert, or employee of average means who was in a group of Egyptian teachers and workers in one of the Arab countries in which Egyptians work, began by collecting from these workers their savings with the understanding that they would turn their savings over to them in Egypt. Then they began their activity, expanding and getting bigger until they became currency dealers. But after these activities had expanded, the currency dealers began trading in huge amounts, estimated to be a billion dollars. Here the difficulty began, since it is absurd that the dealer would transfer the amounts himself, or that the selling and buying would be done with the speed with which it is done.

At this point it was inevitable that the banks would come in as the means for transfer and financing. This takes time, which gives the banks numerous sums and enables them to undertake a great number of banking activities and open credits to importers and, consequently, to produce huge profits.

Therefore some of the banks were in competition, even trying to attract these dealers, and the profits were exchanged until these dangerous dealings became enormous. As a result of this the personal interests of some of the directors and officials of these banks grew.

Dr Mustafa al-Sa'id says, "This dubious alliance is limited to a very small number of bankers, and certainly must not harm the vast majority of leaders in the banking system."

The state began intervening to protect the national economy, and when Mustafa al-Sa'id set about to counter the currency dealers he himself had to face the other side, which had been accorded weight and confidence, and this is the corrupt banking group.

Therefore, at that time there was a grave situation and grave action.

The war began and all weapons, legal and illegal, were used.

Rumors began covering the whole money market. Development was endangered. Foreign investments face disaster in Egypt. One of the main rumors has been the issuance of regulations by the minister of economy to control the movement of credit and the confusion of loans that prevailed in a number of banks, and issuance of the Central Bank of Egypt regulation to confirm its control and authority over the banking system...All this means that there will be stagnation and recession. The Central Bank's supervision over the other banks will lead to a return, once again, to a policy of obscurity.

Confusion reigned for a while, but what was the result?

The ministry of economy says, "Nothing happened that they expected or planned for him, but the value of the Egyptian pound has begun to stay relatively firm and has not dropped in value for the last six months."

Investigations have established an alliance of exchange dealers and their transactions with four specific banks, which are: Bank al-Ahram, Jamal Trust, Faysal al-Islami, and Arab African Egypt. Mustafa al-Sa'id issued his decisions to arrest a number of the officials and dissolve the boards of directors of the offending banks. The board of directors of the Bank al-Ahram, which is owned by Egyptian 'Abdul Latif Abu Rajilah, was dissolved. The bank assets of Lebanese 'Ali al-Jamal, owner of Jamal Trust Bank, were put under detainer, his case has been sent to the socialist public prosecutor, and it has been stipulated that he stay at his home in Misr al-Jadid. Many intercessions were made, but the government turned down a Lebanese appeal, and said that the whole matter is now in the hands of justice, for it to have its final say, because this activity is deliberate sabotage of the Egyptian national economy and is an attempt to bankrupt some banks.

Then a decision was made to turn over a number of the "Mafia" currency dealers to the organization of the socialist public prosecutor for investigation last April, and the fierceness of the battle intensified. The case became a face-to-face confrontation between the currency monarchs and brokers on the one hand and the ministry of economy on the other. The worst of methods were used in denouncing the Minister of Economy. The attack against Mustafa al-Sa'id was redoubled, particularly at the time before the recent formation of the government of Kamal Hasan 'Ali, with the objective of getting Mustafa al-Sa'id out of the cabinet after having tarnished his reputation.

During the socialist prosecutor's investigation of Sami 'Ali Hasan, one of the currency dealers in Egypt, in questioning him about how he got loans without collateral, his answer was that he was not the only one to talk with him about that. Then he exploded his bomb by saying that the minister of economy himself had given assurances to some persons so others would get loans. And Sami 'Ali Hasan produced documents as evidence of that, which he obtained from the dissolved board of directors of Bank al-Ahram.

The rumor spread everywhere in Egypt. The minister of economy himself is using his authority in making loans to his relatives and friends without collateral, from the speedy inquiry it has become clear that Dr Mustafa al-Sa'id actually extended collateral, but this was done before he took over the responsibility of the Ministry of Economy. The collateral was for his brother and for a group of his fellow university professors in an amount that came to only 100,000 pounds for all the borrowers.

Mustafa al-Sa'id himself admits this and says, "I exercised my right as a citizen to provide a guarantee for my colleagues at the university, but all of that took place before my appointment as ministry of economy.

The amount was 100,000 pounds and is a very small part of my holdings and those of my wife. Most of the amount has been paid back. Only about 15,000 pounds remain and the borrowers are in the process of paying that off without problems."

The strange thing about the matter is that the controversy has changed from a political issue into the question as it now stands, did the minister of economy provide surety for a crony or not? And is the minister's wife active in [currency] dealing or not?

Mustafa al-Sa'id says, "The case is now in the hands of the whole society. Public opinion is what will define the extent of its responsibility in protecting this official from slander and statements that attack his integrity, his honor, and his family. The responsibility of society increases if it is established that this slander comes from a corrupt group that is in conflict with the interests of society itself."

But what has happened is that the "Mafia" of currency dealing has managed to make the public believe that the "Mafia" has put the minister of economy in the prisoner's dock instead of the "Mafia's" having been put in the prisoner's dock. Therefore the vicious battle still rages. Attempts to topple the minister in the people's council elections failed. Indeed the man himself was able to get 98 percent of the votes cast in his community in al-Sharqiyah. This is the highest percentage reached in all elections offices. The attempts of the currency "Mafia" to get him removed from the recent make-up of the cabinet headed by Kamal Hasan 'Ali also failed because his being disqualified from the cabinet would have been seen as the state's yielding to robbery by the dealers.

Thus far (and we say thus far because the case file is not yet closed) Mustafa al-Sa'id has been able to establish his innocence and escape from the battle against the currency dealers, "sharks", and private bank owners. He has managed to impose state control, and authority on the foreign banks and put the kingpins of currency dealings, as well as those backing them, in the prisoner's dock.

When I interviewed him, a few days before his departure at the head of an economic delegation to Turkey, Mustafa al-Sa'id was still keeping his nerves on ice. But he is facing a hard battle, which poses the following questions: Will he leave his post at the first change, or will he continue to hold his ministerial responsibilities? It is still certain that President Hosni Mubarak and Prime Minister Kamal Hasan 'Ali will not abandon the Minister of Economy to attacks against him by the currency dealers. And if Mustafa al-Sa'id resigns, he will do so strictly on his own initiative. In any event the next few days will reveal the results of this confrontation.

JOINT RESEARCH SHIELDS SCIENTIFIC ESPIONAGE

Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 21, 28 Aug 84 p 4

/2 Aug 84 p 4/

/Article by Rif'at Sayyid Ahmad: "Scientific Espionage in Egypt Under Cover of Joint Research! Twenty Foreign Agencies Turn Egypt into Testing Ground; American Fifth Column of Researchers"/

/Text/ According to the most serious books published so far about the role of information in U.S. strategy, the one entitled "Invasion of the Minds" by French author Eve Aude, published in 1982 and led to the assassination of its publisher shortly thereafter because of the new and serious information contained in it, American interest in cultural invasion goes back to 1939 when the cultural relations unit was set up in the /U.S./ Department of State to confront the anti-American tide in Latin America. This is the same unit that was later turned into a federal agency known as the "Rockefeller Office," named after its director. This office monopolized the right to distribute news permits without which no information agency using the services of the American news agencies could operate. The office, composed of 1,300 journalists and ad personnel and through its \$140 million budget in 1940, was able to fabricate information fed to Latin American countries and to create several periodicals, recruit 13,000 media personalities in Latin America and become the sole source of information for 1,200 newspapers and 200 radio stations in Latin American countries. It was then that interest in this phenomenon emerged.

USIA and Ford

With the end of World War II, the U.S. began rearranging its papers and global interests in accordance with what was known as the "Cold War" with the USSR. It was natural that interest would focus on those countries neighboring the USSR, specifically Iran, Turkey, Lebanon and Egypt as the "nerve center" of the countries in the area as a whole. Hence the establishment in 1953 of the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) which was charged with developing methods of cultural and informational penetration of Third World countries. To get to

know the agency's tendencies, it is enough to hear the words of its director translated into Arabic by Dr Radwa 'Ashur in the second issue of "AL-MUWAJAHAH" /The Confrontation/:

"We do not have the means for direct communication with the broad masses abroad but we try to talk to them through their leaders, those who control their mass media. That is how we can influence what the masses see in the local media. We concentrate our efforts on a part of the population: the ruling class and the educated class."

In 1951, the most dangerous scientific espionage foundation in the history of the U.S. was set up under the name, "the Ford Foundation." It began its activities in Egypt in 1952 with the outbreak of the July revolution, and, that was no coincidence. To substantiate the foundation's past and present serious role, it suffices to read what Peter Johnson and Judith Tucker had to say in the afore-mentioned 'AL-MUWAJAHAH' issue about how the foundations' espionage role grew in the seventies when it became interested in social, religious and cultural changes in Egypt and the Middle East area for the purpose of studying the basic factors of such changes and to predict them in order to help American policy control the course of change within these societies so as to serve American interests and exterminate one by one those elements that threaten American domination in the areas, particularly following al-Sadah's assassination by religious elements and the outbreak of the Iranian revolution.

Ann Leach: Espionage American Style

As the Ford Foundation's role continues to grow, attention is focused on the caliber of its presidents. It is noted that the foundation's present president in Egypt is Mrs "Ann Mosely Leach" who, ever since her arrival in Egypt, has been playing a dubious role. She has helped, through her wide contacts, to conclude over 20 "research deals" with theoretical and applied colleges at Cairo University and with social, political and strategic studies centers and some left-oriented professors as well. The odd thing is that this lady got her doctorate by writing about "Israel's occupation of the West Bank," funded by the "assistant secretariat of defense for international security affairs," the Rand Organization and the American Department of Defense. Anyone who does not believe us can refer to the July 1975 issue of the "Middle East Research Plan" magazine and to Dr Latifah al-Zayyat who translated the "Middle East Research Network in the U.S.A."

International Affairs Center and MIT

Towards the end of the fifties, and out of a desire to unify the activities of the American research centers interested in the Middle East, the International Affairs Center at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology was set up. The latter has a huge center at Cairo University in the new Dar al-'Ulum College building, which has been working with Cairo University since 1975 on a number of political, social and statistical projects and research

through a team of professors from the colleges of science, business, arts and economics. We can provide names to anyone who wishes to have them!

It is noted that research at these two centers is directly sent to the American intelligence agency to be used in the invasion of the body and mind of the country where the research is being conducted. There are many examples of this, foremost of which are the studies conducted by Douglas Pike on Vietnam, by Israeli Gen Harkabi on the Palestinian resistance and by Gabriel Almond and Lucien Pye on how to counter revolutions. All of these were founded by the two afore-mentioned centers and went directly to American intelligence!

MESA and USICA

In 1951, the Social Sciences Research Council /SSRC/ was founded in the U.S. from which sprang the Middle East Studies Group in 1966 and the Middle East Institute /MEI/. Both directed their attention to the study of religious, psychological and social developments surging in the Middle East, Egypt in particular. This group includes a number of social science and political science professors who maintain close ties with some Egyptian professors that go beyond the scope of joint research to the sphere of family visits:

Among these names are: Charles Issawi; Bernard Lewis; Malcolm Kerr, /AUB president/ who was assassinated this year by Lebanese bullets at the entrance of the American University of Beirut; Leonard Banido; Richard Mitchell whose serious study "The Muslim Brotherhood" was founded by American intelligence; Zionist Answorth Winston; orientalist /H.A.R./ Gibb and /Majid/ Gadduri; Smith and Vatkotes who wrote the important book, "Abd-al-Nasir and His Generation," in which he totally defamed 'Abd-al-Nasir.

In 1978, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency established its most recent apparatus known as the U.S. International Communications Agency (USICA) which replaced USIA. This agency dropped all limits between U.S. informational, educational and cultural activities abroad whereby the state's propaganda machine began dominating a broad section of activities, including student and professor exchange programs, art exhibits and English language instruction. USICA has four departments: the /first is the/ broadcasting department that runs the Voice of America /VDA/ radio station which had a 1979 budget of \$75 million, employs 2,113 employees and has 109 broadcasting stations, 41 of which are in the U.S. itself.

The second department is the programs department that produces and selects film, radio and TV and foreign press cultural material. The third is the cultural and educational affairs department which is responsible for relations between U.S. educational institutes and research centers and their foreign counterparts and oversees the visit exchange program that includes 12,000 visitors of various disciplines annually--Egypt is considered at the top of the visitor countries. There is also the foreign scholarship council. In 1981,

American intelligence appropriated \$48 million for the agency, four times the UNESCO budget. It employs 8,500 full-time employees, plus an additional number of advisors, half of whom work in Washington and the other half overseas, including Egypt and the Arab countries. This is according to the author of the book "Invasion of the Minds."

American Agency for International Development--AID

Dr Sa'd al-Din Ibrahim describes this agency as an "American shadow government in Egypt." This is what it really is and more. It was established especially to consolidate cultural and educational subjection and to tie the countries in which it operates--such as Pakistan, Ethiopia, Venezuela, Jordan, Morocco, Egypt, Brazil, Peru, India and Bangladesh--to the American intelligence code. AID cooperates with the Ford Foundation and the Rand Organization and offers conditional financial aid to all ministries in Egypt and to most Egyptian universities. It participates in extremely sensitive and serious Egyptian social and economic studies, thus threatening the most fundamental and generally-accepted national security practices. Suffice it here to point to research in the fields of religious fundamentalist groups, Lower Egypt, sanitation (!), public transportation projects and birth control!

The American University in Cairo

This university was established in 1919, the year of the first Egyptian revolution. Ever since its establishment, its goal has been to propagate American culture in Egypt and to spread cultural and scientific espionage infiltration inside Egyptian society. A social research center within the university, a subject we revealed a year ago but for various reasons were unable to present it in full. To show how dangerous this organization has been, it is sufficient to point out here that its former president, Christopher Thorn, was a CIA agent during his tenure there and that the curricula, the professors, the students and research are all molded in accordance with the American way of life and education to conform to American strategic needs. Many of its professors, through the social research center, conduct joint studies with Egyptian and foreign professors about Egyptian society and its various issues, a subject that will be dealt with in subsequent articles.

The International Education Institute and the Peace Corps

In 1961, at the personal request of President Kennedy, CIA set up what was known as the Peace Corps which was a group of American professors under the CIA and preaching American civilization and serving as a link between the black minorities in the U.S. and African organization, as well as financing "riot control" operations in friendly countries. At about the same time, the CIA also created the International Educational Institute, made up of 49 persons representing multi-national companies, banks, institutions and universities. It oversees 240 programs,

110 of which are for students and 131 for professors. Furthermore, this institute runs the Fulbright program, the /Hubert/ Humphrey scholarship program, the young employees who are hoped to assume responsible positions in their countries, the South Africa program aimed at sSouth African students and the peace programs for Egypt and the Middle East. Its most important role in Egypt is practiced through the university and the various ministries, the Ministry of Economics in particular.

The European Organizations

After the above American activities, which we will present in detail later on, come the European research activities, specifically the German effort represented by the "Friedrich Ebert," the "Friedrich Neuman" and the "Goethe Andenauer" Institutes that conduct research on the ancestral roots of Egyptian society, with the aim of fragmenting its national structure, and on religious and military issues. Then comes the French and Italian research institutes.

The Israeli academic center in Cairo and its group of agents--I mean scientists--who deal with it, from psychology professors to social sciences professors to political science professors, completes the circle of crime, the crime of joint research in Egypt. But the crime cannot be disregarded thus, and no one can imagine such a thing, particularly since many secrets and documents have not yet been uncovered. But for now, what is the solution?

There Has to Be a Trial

I think the crime of joint research cannot be fully covered without the opinion of our professors and scientists. This is what future articles will deal with, but until then, we must emphasize that Egyptian law, rather international law, allows us, in the presence of a crime, to hold a "trial." We are before a national scientific crime with all the necessary elements, evidence, documentation and names. Its protagonists are alive and well and are even made into national and leftist symbols. Does not our national honor compel us to hold such a trial? This question is left to the educated people of this country to answer after officials of all kinds lost their ability to face up to it and reply! (Next week, other surprises)

/28 Aug 84 p 4/

/"Egypt's Minds Refuse Surrender; Dr Husni Hanafi: The Aim is To Strike at National Researchers; Tariq al-Bashari: The Result, to Serve Western Policy; Dr Hamid Rabi': Sectarian Fragmentation of Egypt, Primary Goal"

/Text/ Examples of Research

Inside the gates of the American University in Egypt, through the Social Research Center specifically, several joint research projects have been underway with joint American funding supplied by the Rand Institute, AID and the Ford Foundation. We shall only mention here a sampling of such research:

-Research on Libyan troop concentrations along Egypt's western borders in which students unwittingly addressed a number of questions to some specialists using an extremely strange technique whereby they were ordered to hide their true capacity, in other words, to deny their being American University students at the political science college which supervised the research.

-A study of Egypt's nuclear capabilities as compared to Israel's, conducted by a university political science professor in collaboration with one Israeli and another American. The research came out in the English language, but nothing about it has been published in Arabic as yet! The book contains important and serious secret information about our nuclear capabilities.

-A study on rich Arab countries and small Arab countries on which a number of Egyptian economics and social science professors collaborated.

-A study on the Nubian community and the possibilities for its repatriation, as well as the potential for partitioning Egyptian society along "racial" and religious lines, a new development that has prompted American interest in Fayyum and Aswan, as we shall see.

-A study on the oases communities al-Dakhiah, al-Kharjah and Siwah, their relations with Libya and their social customs.

-A study on life in Kafr al-'Ulu--Hulwan and how factories changed people's way of life.

-A study on Egyptian familial customs and traditions and how they are handed down.

-An important sociological study on the al-Darb al-Ahmar Quarter.

-A comprehensive study on changes in the concept and method of higher education in Egypt.

-A study on the political thought and social life of Egyptian farmers, as compared to Egyptian laborers.

-A momentous study about jargon and language of criminals in Egypt.

Ford Independent Studies

Besides the scholarship technique by the Ford Foundation that has close ties with American intelligence, according to Peter Johnson, Judith Tucker and Eve Aude, scholarships that are granted to hundreds of researchers in the fields of agriculture, economics, housing, higher education and international relations who are systematically and carefully brainwashed in U.S. institutions, the institute in Egypt conducts and finances many joint studies and also cooperates with Israeli research centers, of which we observe the following:

-Right after the second disengagement agreement between Egypt and Israel in 1975, the Ford Foundation earmarked \$5 million for studies on modernization in Israel, compared to \$23 million earmarked by the U.S. Government for the same purpose, of which the Hebrew University alone got \$12 million.

-The present president of the foundation, Ann Leach, had her doctorate financed by the American Department of Defense and the National Security Council.

-The foundation altered several important studies on Egypt and the Middle East: "Social Change in the Middle Eastern Countries and the Struggle Between Modern and Traditional Influences," "The Palestinian Woman and Her Fertility Rate," "Arabic Literature and Arab Acceptance of Change in Their Societies," and "Fertility Patterns and Factors in the Middle East and Egypt."

Ford appropriated \$7 million for all these studies and recruited famous American research institutes, already mentioned in the first article, in addition to social and political research centers in Egypt and some Egyptian professors.

Besides the Ford Foundation, there is also MIT that has implanted itself at Cairo University, wreaking havoc there, plus AID which we will talk about in detail in future articles. In this article, let us hear the opinions of three national scientists on this dangerous phenomenon, that of joint research in Egypt!

They Are Penetrating Egypt

Cairo University Philosophy professor Dr Hasan Hanafi says about this phenomenon: "Although there is an abundance of accurate information in the West through its research centers, its satellites and all its modern intelligence means directed at the hot spots of the world (Latin America--the Arab region-Asia), they are purely quantitative analyses lacking the local vision. Therefore, we witness every now and then surprises that demonstrate the limits of the quantitative analyses of information (the Islamic revolution in Iran, the 1973 October war and the reviewing stand incident /i.e., the assassination of President al-Sadat/ in October 1981). Hence the resort to local researchers,

particularly the national ones who are highly qualified, can feel the pulse of the people in the street and have a futuristic vision of events. And, since these researchers do not use their full potential in their research centers, universities, institutes and even the progressive parties in the country, and under the pressure of urgent necessities of life, and perhaps in search for more facilities in scientific research and the abundance of information internally and externally, the national researchers felt no hesitation in dealing with foreign research centers and in accepting what they had to offer. This can easily be avoided through the establishment of national research centers to be an outlet for their expertise and the granting of facilities and capabilities to obtain needed information and documentation, just like the foreign researchers who, in the framework, of a general national plan for setting up a new society on the basis of scientific research and serious studies, receive state-sponsored encouragement and rewards to help them meet their needs.

Containment and Fragmentation

In his study on joint research published in AL-AHRAM AL-IQTISADI in February and March 1983, Dr Hamid Rabi' says:

"The information gathering process underway in Egypt today in the guise of scientific cooperation is based on a close alliance and careful coordination between American agencies on the one side, Israeli agencies on another side and NATO on the third side. Coordination is done in full agreement between American and Israeli intelligence.

The question we should be asking candidly and clearly is: What are the long-term goals of Israeli policy which is in agreement with American policy and how can this information gathering process serve both of these policies?

Dr Rabi' answers as follows: "The primary goal is to contain the Egyptian mind and to create total subjection to the American and Israeli minds. The second and dangerous goal is to fragment Egypt confessionally, an area in which information gatherers and spies of American and Israeli joint research are very active. Fragmentation will be on four basic axes."

First, the Coptic State axis, extending from south of Bani Suwayf to south of Asyut and to Fayyum in the west and the long desert line that links this area to Alexandria which will be the capital of the Coptic State, thus separating Egypt from white African Islam and the rest of the Nile Valley!

Second, to deepen the division even more, the southern part extending from Upper Egypt to north of Aswan, known as the Nubian country, will be limited to the Sahara area where Aswan will be the capital of a new state called the Berber State.

Third, the remaining part of Egypt will be called 'Islamic Egypt.' American-Israeli strategy will thus tinge Egypt with a sectarian character after robbing it of its historical capital in the north and its industrial capital in the south.

Fourth, at this point, it will be natural--these are Dr Rabi's words--for Zionist influence to extend across Sinai to embrace south of the Dealta, thus causing Egypt's borders to fade completely from the eastern side and become Port Rashid and the Isma'iliyah Canal.

Dr Rabi' substantiates these important predictions of his with specific facts. He points to Israeli-American research going on under the eyes and ears of the Egyptian government on Fayyum, Aswan, the Copts, the religious groups in Egypt and social and racial particulars in Egypt. Dr Rabi' builds, with exact scientific precision, Egypt's national and social future on all these facts and issues a warning to the heedless officials of the land.

Tariq al-Bashari Warns Against Western Designs on Us

About his diagnosis of the dangers of the joint research phenomenon in Egypt, Justice Tariq al-Bashari says: "This is a dangerous phenomenon since if you want to tighten your grip on a certain group, you have to know everything about it or all you can know about it. Your grip will tighten in proportion to your knowledge of it. If you want to face a threatening adversary, you must know everything about him.

The West has designs on us and is working to tighten its grip on us, hence its interest in learning everything about us. I do not deny, says Tariq al-Bashari, the existence of many individuals, institutions and currents in the West trying to oppose the West's colonialist expansionist policies, but we have to ask ourselves this question: The end result, this knowledge the West is acquiring about us no matter through what channels, whose policy does it serve? The policy of these humanitarian western currents or the western policy we have come to know and endure. One example that comes to mind is the "Islamic Encyclopaedia" which began publication with the onset of the 20th century. An examination of the first edition, which came out during the first two or three decades of this century and was designed at the beginning of the 20th century, clearly shows that its primary focus was on the Ottoman state which contained an almost comprehensive study of conditions, political and social institutions and personalities in very great detail at a time when it had been decided in the West to liquidate this state. We cannot exclude this effort from the scope of political utilization. Notwithstanding the benefit we have derived from this encyclopaedia, we call attention to the political use of such information which is to put an end to the Islamic state. Therefore, and regardless of the good intentions of researchers--researchers always have tendencies toward good intentions--what we caution against here is political use of this phenomenon.

-This dangerous phenomenon, that of joint research, is not over yet. All that has been said and known is but a fraction of a whole, and what is not known is even more significant.

-Before we go on to the other stages of this inquiry, we note here two important issues. The first revolves around the real function for which the state set up social, political and scientific research centers in Egypt. Was it to serve western institutions--and we all know about their close relations with American and Israeli intelligence--or to soak up the brains and sweat of small researchers to serve the American and European West, or ...or? There are thousands of question marks without an answer! The second issue is to answer this difficult question: What is the real function performed by our national universities today? Who is allowing this western penetration of them and who is overseeing such a penetration? In whose interest is the diversion of our national universities' function and the sidetracking of their role? Is it a change in times, or is it political and national, and for how long? -This answer too is left to the educated people of this country in view of the government's silence.

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NEW POLITICAL TENDENCIES ANALYZED

Casablanca LAMALIF in French No 159, Oct 84 pp 4-7

[Article by Zakya Daoud: "A New Political Geography"]

[Text] From elections to elections, the system improves, and today we can see a new political geography taking shape, theoretically destined to affect the nation for the next 6 years.

It is founded on an extremely subtle relationship of forces between six dominant groups, for the small parties of the right or center (although these terms do not have much meaning) have disappeared from the scene, while less significant groups continue to exist on the left, and this is no chance occurrence.

This relationship of forces is the result of a formula in which primacy no longer means predominance as it did seven years ago, and even as recently as a year ago; and in which gains in votes occasion losses of seats, whereas the gains of seats occasion losses of votes, although on the local level it is not the strongest elements that profit from electoral districts and can get the same delegates elected in the same district. Thus no one has a majority and everyone gains as much as he loses, except, of course, the UC [Constitutional Union] whose role, it would seem, is to stop up holes by complementing or reducing the other groups. Thus all the possible variants are available for a very open game of alliances, once the programs have been presented. The

price of the formula, which is certainly "democracy," and desired as ardently as it is promulgated, is a much more extensive absenteeism than before and all the more striking in that it is urbanized.

But one may always reply that absenteeism is henceforth the fate of all "advanced democracies" and that they tend to become accustomed to it. In the article below, Zakya Daoud examines this new political geography to which less than 50 percent of Moroccans have contributed, the majority of them rural dwellers; and Mohamed Jibril, after stressing this weak participation, wonders what parliament and what government can have come forth from it, all the more so because the term of alternation is disputed. The speculations--which are going on at a merry pace--seem to him nonetheless to be less important than the solution of the country's real problems.

One cannot say that the overall results of the voting in several stages, culminating in the composition of the fourth Moroccan parliament since independence are that much of a surprise: the UC, in the 17 months of its existence, has made solid gains, which although expected, leave all the observers and the politicals themselves gasping for breath. Actually, the reason for this success remains an unknown, all the more so because the parliamentary and governmental processes ought logically to take the results into account: 55 seats in the direct elections plus one vote from the outside, and 27 in the indirect, give it one-third of the electorate. Nevertheless, it is not the near-majority that benefited the independents in the previous parliament; they were to give birth simultaneously to the RNI [National Rally of Independents], then afterward, through the interplay of various secessions, to the PND [National Democratic Party].

Moreover, the fact must be brought out that the UC is scattered and without any real regional districts to call its own.

Today these two reunited groups (the RNI and the PND) have a total of 27.79 percent of the seats, as opposed to 46.02 percent 7 years ago.

UC: Primacy and not Preponderance

They have thus lost 20 percent of their seats to the UC, which has in addition brought back together--these are, of course,

	INDEP/FDIC/NEUTRALS	UC	PND	MP	ISTAQAL	USFP	PPS
1960 LOCALS VOTES	25%				45%	30%	
1963 LOCALS SEATS	10,009	240			721	131 UNFP 3 UMT	
LEGISLATIVES VOTES	1,160,000	456,000			1,024,000	751,000	
PERCENTAGE	34%	13%			30%	23%	
SEATS	69	6			41	28	
PERCENTAGE	48%	5%			28%	19%	
1969 LOCALS PERCENTAGE	82.79%			12.71%	4%	0.5% (UNFP)	
1976 LOCALS VOTES	2,444,452	PA } 38,000 PLP } PDC }		305,381	725,899	347,273	38,389
PERCENTAGE	59.07%			7.50%	17.83%	8.53%	0.54%
SEATS	8			1 045	484	874	26
PERCENTAGE	64.43%			7.82%	16.34%	6.54%	0.19%
1977 LEGISLATIVES VOTES	2,254,297			625,786	1,090,960	738,541	116,470
PERCENTAGE	44.68%			12.40%	21.80%	14.63%	2.30%
DIRECT SEATS	81			29	45	16	1
PERCENTAGE	46.02%			16.47%	26.13%	9.11%	
TOTAL VOTING	141 delegates ¹			44	50	16	1
1983 LOCALS VOTES	644,931	739,439	550,423	552,323	853,893	295,395	32,769
PERCENTAGE	13.58%	15.57%	11.59%	11.63%	17.98%	6.22%	0.69%
SEATS	2 211	2 731	1 839	1 896	2 605	538	19
PERCENTAGE	14.26%	17.61%	11.93%	12.23%	16.83%	3.46%	0.12%
1984 LEGISLATIVES VOTES	763,395	1,101,502	396,370	695,020	681,083	550,291	102,314
PERCENTAGE	17.18%	24.79%	8.92%	15.64%	15.33%	12.39%	2.30%
SEATS	61	835 ¹	24	47	43	39	2
PERCENTAGES OVERALL	19.94%	28.78% ²	7.85%	15.36%	14.06%	12.76%	0.66%
OADP: 1 seat 0.33 PUSN: 1 seat 0.33							
	Nevertheless the MPDC has 69,862 votes or 1.57%. The PDI has 20,156 votes or 0.45%						

¹Plus three MPDC and one PA seats.

²If one adds to this figure the five UMT seats.

nothing more than pure speculations--the former neutrals and such small groups as the MPDC [Popular Democratic Constitutional Movement], the PA [Organization of Democratic and Popular Action] and the PDI [Democratic Independence Movement], which have disappeared (temporarily?) from the political chessboard. At any rate, and curiously, if one looks at the results of the local elections of last year, the UC does not count the votes it had obtained with those of the neutrals: 641,427 votes have disappeared, or are perhaps to be found among those of the MP [People's Movement] (which gained 140,000 votes in comparison with last year), the RNI (which gained 120,000) the USFP [Socialist Union of Popular Forces] (which gained 250,000) or even the PPS [Party of Progress and Socialism] (which gained 70,000). All of these groups have in fact gained votes in comparison to last year (and if we consider only the separate votes of the UC, it, too, gained some 362,000). By contrast, the PND lost 154,000 and the Istiqlal lost 172,000. And these are the very two parties that appeared to be the losers in the direct elections, even if they were saved by the indirect elections, the first finding itself with 24 seats (of which 15 were direct) and the second attaining, with the two UGTM [General Union of Moroccan Workers] seats and its own 17 indirect seats, a total of 43, which made up for its unfortunate 23 direct seats, representing half of its past gains.

All the comparisons that can be made--with the last legislative elections in 1977 as much as with the local ones last year--and which, moreover, do not necessarily cross-tally, are fallacious nevertheless, so clear is it that a new political chessboard is in place today. The latter is based primarily on the primacy of the UC, which, it will be noted, is not a preponderance; and that fact ought to be enough to prevent any members of this group (including 10 elected members of the executive bureau) from chanting a victory paean.

Immediately after the UC comes the RNI, which counted on getting 60 seats and did get 60, with 22 in the indirects and nine members of its executive bureau elected. A bit marginalized in the first term with 38 seats, this party, to which has fallen the role of promulgating from time to time a few principles based on common sense, with the strength of its 6 years of existence, will henceforth be ranked second, yet there is room to wonder whether in fact it does not rank first. First of all because it did win votes in comparison to last year, but also and especially because it has secured several regional districts, such as that of Tanger, even though it has lost that of Tetouan and because, by a subtle formulation, it finds itself scattered enough to be able to figure in all the regions. Lastly because its other embodiment, the PND, did not prove--quite the contrary--that it could thwart the latter, and it scored a loss destined,

it would seem, to be reaffirmed subsequently. Together, the RNI and the PND have as many seats as the UC. And all told, they have the absolute majority in the fourth parliament, that is 176 seats out of 306, just as the independents had the absolute majority in the former parliament, with 141 out of about 264 seats.

The great winner in these elections, however, seems to be the party that stands in third place, the MP, whose base is so much more broadly extended in that its traditional bailiwicks have been preserved in various regions. If one judges on the level of the electoral progression, since this is possible in the case of Mr Ahardane, his party, which at the governmental level never enjoyed a degree of participation in conformity with its electoral votes, and which is always relatively unobtrusive in the political arena, has won many votes: from 305,381 in 1976 it moved up to 625,786 in 1977, fell a little in 1983 with 552,323 votes and has come back up to 695,000 today. In the momentum of its stride, it has won three seats more than in the previous parliament, and for the first time since independence --an appreciable evening of the score if one recalls the events of 1957-1958--it is outstripping the Istaqlal party.

One Winner, the MP, and Two Losers

At the same level of progression, the Istaqlal, which has, however, secured the elections of seven members of its executive committee, confirms the tendency which since 1963 has been causing it to lose votes in every election, even if today, inasmuch as the alarm signal of the direct elections has rung very loudly, it may consider--and persuade others to consider--its final score as a victory: it had more than a million votes in 1963, 725,000 in 1976; in 1977 it had moved up to a million votes again and in 1983, although it was then in power, it found itself again with 853,000 and today with 681,000. Even though it has not yet lost half of its electorate, however, it has lost exactly half of its influence, to judge by the number of its seats in comparison to 1963. And the fact that it has lost overall only seven seats in comparison to 1977, cannot delude a party that held a broad majority at independence and has a very long past behind it.

Another loser was the USFP, even if certain observers may say the opposite: it had 751,000 votes in 1963, 347,273 in 1976, 738,541 in 1977 (one will note this ambiguous alternation), 295,395 in 1983 and 550,291 in 1984. According as one considers 1983 or 1977, it either gained a great deal or lost a great deal, even though as far as seats are concerned, it now has 39, with the three from the CDT [Democratic Labor Confederation],

in contrast to the 16 it had in the former parliament, which were soon reduced to 15, then to 14. So why a loser? Because in the direct elections the USFP landed in third place immediately behind the UC-RNI complex, whereas after the indirect elections, it let itself be outstripped by the MP and the Istaqal, and now has a lead only on the PND. In addition, it lost its preponderance in certain cities, keeping no more than half of Casablanca, all of Rabat, half of Fez and all of Agadir. One may, of course, give various interpretations to this figure, like all the others--with the exception of that of the PND which is undeniable--since from 57 delegates it dropped to 24, even if seven of those are members of its political bureau. (Besides, all the political staff members are elected: 10 for the UC, nine for the RNI, seven for the Istaqal, the USFP and the PND, three for the MP and two for the PPS). One cannot deny the fact, however, that the party newly introduced into the governmental system, the USFP, ranks in the second-to-last spot of the six political groups that the PPS used to call "the gang of six," a rank which thus remains, despite everything, a lesser one. (According to Mustapha Sehimy in LE MESSAGE, No. 50, the voting disadvantaged the PI [Democratic Party of Independents] and the PND while it favored the USFP, the UC and the RNI).

An examination of PPS gains (two delegates instead of one) and despite everything nearly the same number (less, in fact) of votes as in 1977, along with an examination of the gains made by the OADP [Popular Constitutional and Democratic Movement], which appears for the first time in the parliament with its secretary general, does not exempt us from a rather careful look at the overall political complexion, which is characterized by a number of very finely drawn lines. On the national level, in fact, certain parties are winning votes but losing seats, others are winning seats but losing votes (for example, the USFP and the PPS); and if one of the facts, no doubt an important one, still defies analysis for the moment--that of the configuration proper to each elected candidate at the regional level, it is noteworthy to consider the fact that the provinces or the prefectures can rarely be credited to a single party, with the exception of the small ones such as Tata (RNI), Tan-Tan (RNI but PI in the indirect elections), Ifrane (MP), Boujdour (PI, but RNI in the indirect elections) and Smara (PND, but PI in the indirect elections). The only notable exception is that of the province of Tanger, whose four seats are credited to the RNI in the direct elections, a fact confirmed by the indirect elections.

If the UC predominates in Essaouira (three seats out of four), in El Jadida (four seats out of seven), in Settat (three seats out of seven) in Nador (three out of five), if it has two-thirds of the provinces of Guelmim and Khouribga, half of the Rabat-Sale-Skhirate region, Benslimane (one seat out of two), it also

has one-third of the provinces of Fez (two seats out of seven), Al-Hoceima (one out of three), Beni-Mellal (two out of six), Safi (two out of six), one-third of Taza, and nine delegates out of 23 in the Casablanca region, which does not give it the majority.

These tendencies are confirmed for the provinces of Essaouira, Settat, Nador and Tiznit in the indirect elections, brought about as a result of the local elections; they are also confirmed for Rabat and Casablanca (three seats out of six), but the UC shares the seats from the indirect elections in Beni-Mellal with the USFP, in Safi with the PI and in Fez with the RNI. Then, too, the UC cannot, given the recency of its birth, justifiably claim electoral "possession" of the delegates' bailiwicks, for if five of its own were in office already, it was naturally under the banner of some other political group.

On the other hand, the RNI compensates for its relative weakness compared to the UC, by the introduction of its delegates, of whom 32 out of 38 were already members of the previous congress. At the regional level, it has at its disposition the entire Tanger region, including direct and indirect elections; it loses Oujda where it represents no more than a third (two seats out of seven), but gains Sidi-Kacem (two seats out of five), Taounate (two out of five) and Taza (two out of six), monopolizing in addition half of the province of Boulemane, that of Guelmim, one-third of Al-Hoceima and one-sixth of Marrakesh, the former bailiwick of the Istaqlal, where today no group is dominant any longer, even in the indirect elections, since a UC, a PI and an MP are present; thus the Istaqlal party nevertheless retains three seats in this city, whereas the UC has four out of 12. Yet the direct introductions of RNI representatives are rarely confirmed by the indirect elections, with the exception of the province of Figuig and that of Tanger. In all the other cases, some UC, some PI and even a few PND representatives are present to counterbalance its influence in the direct elections.

As for the MP, it predominates only in the province of Ifrane (one seat out of one), but it has half of the province of Figuig, all of Khemisset, three-fourths of the provinces of Azilal, Ouarzazate and Khenifra, half of the province of Boulemane, one-third of the province of Beni-Mellal and one-fourth of that of Taza (two seats out of six). This representation is confirmed in the indirect elections for the provinces of Azilal, Ifrane, Ouarzazate, Khemisset and Taza. Moreover, the MP has in the same places secured the elections of seven out of 23 delegates in the direct elections.

With one delegate occupying one seat in Boujdour, the Istaqlal party is not predominant anywhere; it has no more than one-sixth of Marrakesh, its traditional bailiwick, half of the provinces of Sidi-Kacem, Er-Rachidia and El-Kelaa, plus one-third of Al-Hoceima and Kenitra. This regional representation is confirmed by the indirects only in the case of the province of Er-Rachidia and in Mohammedia. However, nine out of 23 of the former delegates of the Istaqlal were reelected at the same places in the directs.

If the USFP has also in the same places secured the reelection of 11 of its 34 direct delegates, it is not more preponderant in any place, and even the great cities that it had grabbed up in the local elections of 1983 are now wriggling out of its clutches: thus it has to share Casablanca with the UC, and there it has only eight delegates out of 23, which gives no one the majority; it must similarly share Rabat with the UC, and there it has, like the latter, four delegates out of nine. It holds a lead in Meknes (four out of six seats), in Fez (three out of seven), in Tetouan (three out of six), in Kenitra (two out of seven), in Safi (two out of six), loses the majority in Agadir, to keep only two seats out of five there, and it cops two seats in Marrakesh.

These tendencies are naturally not confirmed by the indirect elections, since the USFP has only one seat from that source in Beni-Mellal; everywhere else, the UC, the MP and the PND are present to counterbalance any regional importance that it has been able to acquire.

One last good point, the PND, which has secured the reelection of 10 former delegates out of 15 in the direct elections, no longer has a real territorial claim, with only two seats out of seven in Oujda, two out of six in Beni-Mellal, two out of five in Taroudant, and one out of two in Benslimane. In the indirects, it is no longer present, even sparsely, except in the regions of Meknes, Taroudant and in the Sahara, as well as in Oujda, El-Jadida and Al-Hoceima.

The Ones That Have Disappeared

We may also mention the total disappearance of the MPDC, the PDI and the PA, whereas the OADP has appeared with one delegate, and a new group is making its entrance, which had appeared in the local elections of 1983 with 24 candidates, two of them elected--0.1 percent of the seats and 0.07 percent of the votes: the Party of National Unity and Solidarity, which, although it has presented a few delegates in certain regions, such as Skhirate, Casablanca and Tetouan, had only one seat in Lyon. The MPDC did not have a single member elected, even

though it had presented candidates just about everywhere, and particularly in Taza, Casablanca, Rabat-Sale, etc. And the same may be said for the PDI, which had presented several, particularly in Rabat and Casablanca, and again for the PA, which was represented in the regions of Taounate, Tata, Tiznit, Tetouan, etc. However, one must remember that as recently as last year the MPDC had presented 682 candidates at the local elections and had secured seats for 94 of them, or 0.60 percent of the seats and 0.89 percent of the votes. As for the PDI, it had presented 548 candidates and got 46 elected, or 0.29 percent of the seats and 0.61 percent of the votes. Finally the PA had presented 157 candidates, and got 21 elected, or 0.13 percent of the seats and 0.19 percent of the votes. What has become of all these groups?

All the more is it noteworthy to emphasize the fact that more than 110 of the present delegates (including 96 in the directs) were also delegates in the former parliament, which thus means that, since half of the former members of parliament had run, they were virtually all elected.

One may also take note of the fact, along with the highly satisfied minister of the interior, that 40 percent of these elected officials are between 34 and 45 years of age, and that 20 percent of them are older than 54 years of age, therefore that 40 percent of them are young, and that in addition, moreover, 50 percent have had a university education, in contrast to the 25 percent of 1963 and the 40 percent of 1977, and that all the professions are represented. Even with 59 agriculturalists and 62 members of various liberal professions, we still have, as usual, a majority of civil servants or persons with ties to the civil service, the others having connections with the business world. But one may also bring out the fact that although there were only 16 female candidates, which is both absurd and ridiculous, none of them were elected.

The Absent

As a general rule, commentators show satisfaction with the flood of candidates: 1333 in the final analysis, which makes an average of seven per seat, whereas in the previous legislative elections there were only four or five on an average. Yet few people note the fact that out of 7,414,846 registered voters, who had shown a more than 90-percent participation in the referendum concerning the union with Libya, only 4,999,646 came out to vote, and only 4,443,004 really expressed their votes. That means an alienation affecting 3 million Moroccans, without counting all those who have never registered (and who, according to the census, number about 3 million), and an electo-

ral participation less than that of the local elections last year and even the legislative elections of 1977, during which we had seen an 82.36 percent voter turnout, as contrasted with 67.43 percent this time, and this does not include the 11.03 percent of invalid ballots, which some ascribe to "militant alienation," as opposed to the passive alienation of those who do not go to vote. This is all the more noteworthy in that, in certain large cities, such as Fez, Tetouan, Tanger and Rabat, the voter turnout did not exceed 30 percent of the registered electorate; and in other cities, such as Casablanca, Nador, Marrakesh and Meknes, the turnout did not exceed 40 percent of those registered. It is also in the large cities that one finds the invalid ballots, which is just as important an indicator as the distribution of votes and seats, and much more important than the number of candidates and parties that have entered the combat. Speaking in general, 50 percent of Moroccans did not elect this parliament, and still fewer if one considers that 10 million of them are potentially of voting age.

8117

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TUNISIA

RELEASED GHANNOUCHI DISCUSSES PRISON LIFE, OTHER MATTERS

Kuwait AL-MUJTAMA' in Arabic No 682, 11 Sep 84 pp 18-22

[Interview with Rached Ghannouchi, Leader of Islamic Tendency Movement, in Tunisia: "After Decree for His Release Rached Ghannouchi Says, 'Violence Is a Trumped Up Charge Made against Muslims; the Country Was Headed to All-Out Conflict' "]

[Text] Supporters of the Islamic Tendency [Movement] (MTI) and of all the national and democratic forces fighting for public and individual liberties saw the release of MTI leaders [from prison] as a good omen.

The decree which was issued by the head of state on 1 August 1984, complied with an urgent popular demand that manifested itself in a series of investigations, initiatives and publicity campaigns that were carried out by most opposition and independent newspapers.

In the coming days several developments on different levels may take place: the political scene may regain the dynamic quality it had lost; and the national dialogue that is being hoped for may take on a new twist.

Prison Is a Brutal Institution

[Question] We would like to ask you at the beginning of this interview a question that has to do with your former status as a Tunisian citizen who was imprisoned. After these 3 years, how would you evaluate the prison institution in society?

[Answer] This is a very important question. Although this institution--prison--represents an entire world, a world that is separated from the outside world by only a few walls and doors, it remains unknown. Not only is the world of prison unknown, but also most of the ideas we have about it are erroneous: they require considerable correction or rather radical change.

Let's take, for example, the inmates of this institution, that is, the prisoners. I am not talking here about political prisoners who, despite poor prison conditions, have many privileges that prisoners who are in prison according to due process of law do not have. Despite government assertions that political prisoners are in prison in accordance with due process of law, the

government does actually afford them special treatment. I am thus talking here about people who are in prison in accordance with due process of law. These people are treated in a manner that is incompatible with the simplest moral and humanitarian principles. The class system in prison is greater and more deep-seated than it is in society. There is a flourishing trade in prison: everything one can think of--that which is useful and that which is harmful--can be bought and sold. Furthermore, the law holds no sway in prison. Although the authority of the law in our society is limited, the difference between respecting the law outside prison and in prison is considerable.

A prisoner has no human rights. In fact, prisons have existed without laws for a long time. In prison the authority of the guard and the prison administration is absolute. My colleagues and I were involved in a war of nerves that lasted for 3 years from morning to evening. In the civilian prison in particular we heard nothing but the sound of flogging. People were flogged, and no determination was made as to how many times or how they were to be flogged. The prison administration did not determine that either. A prisoner would be flogged until he loses consciousness. Water would then be poured on him [to revive him], and the flogging would resume. Let me here parenthetically bring this matter to the attention of intellectuals in our country who many times expressed their distaste for some punishments in Islam. They denounced such punishments as flogging and launched campaigns against them, even though there are special conditions for administering that punishment as well as provisions for how many times and how a person is to be flogged. Prisons, however, which were created as alternatives to the practice of flogging offenders did not prevent it. Prisoners are flogged at the police station as soon as they are arrested. The flogging then continues non-stop in prison. We are not going to mention after that the crowded conditions in prisons. Prisoners do not find the physical space for their bodies. In many instances they have to use the bathroom without [the privacy provided] by partitions.

Much explanation is required in reporting about prisons so that public opinion would take notice of this tragedy and understand it. I would almost say that the worst institution in our country, or rather the worst institution invented by civilization, is the institution of prison. In its best form it destroys man's body; it also destroys his spirit and his mind. The fact that in prison man is deprived of the most important component of his humanity, which is his freedom, is aggression enough. In prison man is confined to a narrow space, and his world closes in on him. He becomes depressed; the world around him becomes a confining place; and his life loses its meaning. It is for this reason that I say that the institution of prison still lives in my mind. I do not think it will be erased from my mind as long as it continues to destroy man's nature unchecked by any law. Prison will not be erased from my mind as long as prison administration, which exercises absolute power, knows nothing but flogging prisoners and subduing them. Not even political prisoners are spared that. One week before we were released a group of our colleagues were subdued despite the guarantees that are afforded to political prisoners and exemplified in the pressure of public opinion.

This brutal institution, prison, does not do anything to rehabilitate people. It is in every way a destructive institution. What is even more odd is that

although some intellectuals and opposition forces were subjected to the predicament of imprisonment, they soon forgot the tragedy of prisoners.

I sensed a complete change in my attitude toward prisoners who were imprisoned in accordance with due process. Like the rest of citizens in this country I used to view prisoners as criminals, and this is relevant to the fact that we were being held in a national prison, Borj Roumi Prison, where murderers and other criminals serving sentences of 20 years to life at hard labor were being held. I used to believe that those people came to this world to commit crimes and that they had lost any humane sense of the crimes they were committing. When one of those people would walk by me, I would wince. However, after living with them and despite the numerous barriers that were put up between us by the prison administration--in this regard I don't know whether they were afraid for us or afraid for them--at any rate, we were able to communicate with some of those people by a variety of means. I discovered that we were completely wrong [about them] and that society and we had been unfair to them. I even found in their midst people who exemplified gentleness, human values and ideas of gentlemanly conduct, some of which our society needs to regain. Soon many of them reformed themselves and turned into models of piety and steadfast faith. That worried the prison administration, so it summoned a group of investigators to find out how that change had occurred and how what it calls Muslim Brothers were able to politicize the prison.

The prisoners were questioned about how they began to pray, as though prisoners were not required to pray or were not attracted to prayer or to any humane concepts! Some of these prisoners were severely tortured, and they proved to be much more steadfast than political [prisoners]. This made me feel obligated to report to society on the tragedy of those people. Prison is incompatible with the nature of man, and it totally contradicts Islam. The message of Islam is one of liberating society. God Almighty defined the messengers' mission of deliverance [as follows]: "He will make good things lawful to them and prohibit all that is foul. He will relieve them of their burdens and of the shackles that weigh upon them" [al-A'raf: 157].

One of the prophet's principal missions was that of breaking down the chains that burdened humanity. Prison is the harshest chain of all and the one that is hardest to bear. Man is lost in prison, and his innate character is destroyed. But God Almighty was Merciful: He made prison tolerable for us, and despite the negative, emotional effects we suffered, He turned many of these drawbacks into advantages. It is this that makes me affirm that imprisonment is like fighting: loathsome; but what is even more loathsome is accepting injustice and degradation. The Prophet Joseph, may peace be with him, said, "Lord, sooner would I go to prison than give in to their advances" [Yusuf: 33].

Political Parties and Us

[Question] The publicity campaign that was launched by the government before your imprisonment attempted to sideline you as much as possible by setting up a "democratic" alliance that was directed against you. These 3 years proved that this alliance did not materialize. What did happen, however, is that most of the opposition and independents sided with you. Were you surprised by that position? Did it change your view of the political scene in the country?

[Answer] I am talking here about my own attitude and my own feelings. I did not sense a significant shift in the position of political forces and their view of the Islamic Tendency Movement, despite the plain and urgent appeal that was made to them by the regime and the incentives and threats that accompanied that appeal. This is because our relations with political forces in the country were solid before our imprisonment. These relations were not restricted to personal contacts. They went beyond that and included official meetings as well as involvement in some projects which continued to be limited, but not because of the Islamic Tendency. We had hoped that involvement in these projects would be on higher levels, but some of our colleagues in some of the other tendencies have their own circumstances. What matters is that we were not unknown to them, and they were not unknown to us. It seems to me that this was a principal factor in the abysmal failure of that alliance which the regime had called for. It is an alliance that I call sinful because it would have been an alliance against the interests of the opposition itself and because it would have been ultimately an alliance against the interests of the people who are hurt by many of the regime's policies and positions, including its policy toward the Islamic Tendency. The target of that policy is not the Islamic Tendency as a political party; the target of that policy is rather freedom and democracy and ultimately the people of this country.

[Question] In the past 3 years democracy has taken root in the ranks of the Islamic Tendency rather significantly. Was this process tactical or strategic?

[Answer] Our call for democracy was not dictated to us by prison conditions. Our call for democracy was unequivocal and clear before our imprisonment. The declaration of 6 June 1981 was the culmination of that call for democracy; imprisonment merely reinforced that trend. Unless all parties accept the equal right of all parties to exist and all the other rights that go along with that, the country is headed to an all out conflict. Imprisonment thus reinforced this conviction; it did not create it.

No Separation between Religion and the State

[Question] Shortly before the latest relaxation of restrictions some government circles were saying that they would not object to the Islamic Tendency having a legitimate presence, provided the movement make a distinction between religion and politics because there is no justification for an Islamic party in a Muslim, Arab country [such as] Tunisia. This is because we are all Muslims. [If we were to have an Islamic party], we would become quite involved in the intricate complexities of declaring people non-believers and making judgments about people's intentions and beliefs. What do you think about that view?

[Answer] I don't think that government today is still making that claim and calling upon Muslims to renounce a basic premise in Islam and the principle of universality in Islam which stems from believing in the unity of God. I said I did not think that government was serious about adhering to that claim because it understands that this is not the nature of Islam. There are many officials of this state who wrote books that emphasized repeatedly the cultural and political implications of this universality in Islam. Therefore, I don't believe that government is still making that claim. Even if its understanding of Islam were different from ours, the government understands that our conviction is unshakable. Government knows that we were asked repeatedly to renounce those

convictions, but our answer was the same: we adhere to our principles, and we ask those who want to deal with us to do so on the basis of those principles. We would not have others forced to renounce their principles, so we ask that we be treated in a similar manner.

Regarding the claim that our use of the term, "Muslim," to describe our movement makes that designation exclusive to us and robs others of being Muslims, let me begin by saying and emphasizing that the matter is nothing more than a term we use to describe the movement. It is known that every designation for a movement or for anything else focuses on that movement's predominant aspect. When we say that something is socialist, that does not mean that it is not democratic. Saying that a movement is constitutional does not mean that others are not. Parties make a designation dominant, referring to the whole by one of its parts if that part is the most obvious in that whole. Furthermore, everyone may call what belongs to him, his children and his products anything he wishes to call them provided the names that are used define the objects bearing those names so that ambiguities can be eliminated.

We have affirmed more than once that an Islamic designation for our movement does not mean setting up a monopoly over Islam. We have no doubts about the Islam of the people of this country despite the corruption that appears on the surface, which is the result of subordination, intellectual conquest and the old and new colonialism. Therefore, the matter of declaring people non-believers, which was attributed to this group, is part of the negative publicity that was waged by the government against us. Some intellectuals and some politicians may have taken part in that with the government. I think that this is the result of misunderstanding Islamic concepts and of being influenced by prevailing ideas about religion, as these are understood by the West. However, our rejection of the premise of separating religion from the state does not at all mean that those who do not participate in the Tendency forfeit their Islam. What is more important than that is that we do not claim that everything we say, do, or devise and the positions we assume are manifestations of Islam that people must accept as such. We do not say that those who oppose what we say, do or devise and those who oppose the positions we take are opposing Islam. The things we say and do are human efforts, and like all human efforts, what we say and do may be right or wrong. We also give ourselves the right to exercise our independent judgment within the legal framework that is set for that. Others also have the right to exercise their independent judgment in dealing with Islam. From a theoretical standpoint people are free to exercise their independent judgment, but we think that there are conditions for doing so in dealing with Islam to ensure that this is done in a committed and earnest manner.

By the way, I do wonder about some of the statements and positions that were attributed to us by some newspapers but were never made by us. There is, for example, a statement that we would adhere to the principle of separating religion from politics. I think that the Islamic Tendency would lose its *raison d'être* if it were to accept such a premise.

The Personal Status Code: Is It a Boon?

[Question] Some circles in and outside government believe that the Islamic Tendency may place the country's recent gains in jeopardy. The most glaring

example they cite as evidence of that claim is the Personal Status Code and the question of the emancipation of women. They claim that the Islamic Tendency would take us back to the days of harems and polygamy, etc., and they base that claim on some articles, speeches and studies that came out in the past 10 years. What would be your response to that suspicion? Do you actually believe that your movement puts the recent gains made by women in jeopardy?

[Answer] These are big words, considering that a discussion about what has been gained is a matter of one's point of view. To say that something has been a gain is to make an evaluation, and there is no harm in that. This may be done provided that the content of these slogans is determined. After that, we become entitled to make an evaluation. But making such generalizations and affirming that some things are gains would, I think, ruin intellectual effort in the first place because it would attribute a kind of sanctity to a set of human views and choices.

Every choice that is made by humans is a choice that may be right or wrong; an evaluation of that choice is required. This insistence that this action was something that the people of Tunisia gained does, I think, confiscate somewhat the right of the Tunisian people to evaluate matters freely. I do not think that such a course benefits the evolution of intellectual life in our country. Instead, it sets up a group of idols in front of which people tremble and minds become paralyzed. It would be all right for one person to say that this is a gain for me, but it is not all right to say it is a boon for the people. Also, as though that were not enough, that boon is defined in terms of the emancipation of women in Tunisia. What does one mean by the emancipation of women? Does the word apply to women's work in management? Does it apply to women's education? Does it apply to the condition of the family? Sociologists in Tunisia, or rather most people, realize that our families are going through a crisis. Is this crisis part of the gains scored by the Personal Status Code? Is the crisis unrelated to the Code, or is it somewhat related to it? Women today--and not only women, but we are talking about women in this context--are in many areas a commodity in a capitalist market. Their services are offered at the lowest prices to multi-national companies and to the companies that came into being after the laws of April 1972. Are these gains? The question then ought not to be considered in general terms. Instead, it must be considered in detail, and it must be evaluated slowly so that the pros and cons can be understood. Since the Islamic Tendency has not issued an official evaluation of the code, someone like me, therefore, ought not to rush into this matter and come up with one. Attempts are being made, and I would say these attempts are serious, to evaluate this human endeavor and determine its pros and cons. This is being done without any prejudice, gratuitous tension, glorification or disdain.

We have the right to evaluate this code and all the actions and choices that are being applied or proposed. These actions are not sacred. This does not mean, however, that the status of women before the Civil Status Code was sound; nor does it mean that everyone who criticizes some aspect of this code is necessarily an enthusiastic advocate of restoring conditions to what they were before the Code. This is a matter we want to call attention to so that people would not think that we advocate the restoration of the status that existed before this Code. I am convinced that many of the values and relationships that dominated the family before the Code were conditions that Islam does not sanction. Muslims before others had to rebel against those conditions.

Violence Is Totally Incompatible with Islam

[Question] Some people have tried to accuse the Islamic Tendency of violence. As known, the Islamic Tendency has explained its position on violence on numerous occasions. We mention here in particular your article which appeared in the newspaper AL-MUSTAQBAL early in 1981 under the title, "Islam and Violence." There are those who claim that these [accusations] are games and tactical positions because violence in the present situation would not serve the movement's interests. Those who accuse the Islamic Tendency of violence think that the Tendency's ideas can only lead to violence because the movement's ideas are totalitarian. They are ideas that propound the notion of one truth not several. This kind of thinking finds fault with anyone who does not go along with it. Consequently, violence is its inevitable outcome. What is your attitude toward this charge?

[Answer] I think that repetition is one of the dangerous techniques employed by the contemporary media. They play variations on the same theme and harp continuously on the same tune until the masses are trained and those convictions that were rejected at first become as facts. Certain persons in particular are being called upon to defend themselves. We out of all people were forced into a defendant's position, and we are being asked to defend ourselves. We have to wonder about the reasons for such an accusation. Is this charge being leveled at us because we became famous? Every day and on every occasion we are accused of carrying canes and of having organized militias that engage in violent acts against the public or against political parties! Those who engage in violent acts are safe from such a charge; no one would make such a charge against them. Instead, the charge is leveled against those on whom the violent acts are perpetrated!

Actually, I am very much surprised by the fact that we find the press waiting for us in more than one place despite all the statements we issued, despite all the persecution that has been and is being directed against us and despite the fact that we just got out of prison a few days ago and are still licking our wounds. The press then tells us, "Defend yourselves against the charge of violence which is still being leveled against you despite what has befallen you. It is a charge that follows you exclusively."

Let me say in this regard that we are victims not perpetrators of violence. Those who commit violent acts against us are two kinds of people: those who commit the violence themselves or those who accuse us of it. Both are engaged in the same process: one is perpetrating the violence, and the other is justifying it.

A charge of committing acts of violence does not come from committing such acts because the facts show that violence was perpetrated against us in a variety of ways, not from the beginning of our imprisonment but even before then. Suffice it to say that today we are denied [the right of] meeting with a large number of our colleagues who are scattered throughout the world. In fact, some of them are still in prison. But that is not all: our media and our classes have been and still are suspended; and the list [of violent acts against us] goes on. Violence is not perpetrated against us exclusively, but we are more likely than others are to have violent acts committed against us. What is even worse is that such practices are (recurring).

The charge of committing acts of violence then is not based on the fact that we did commit such acts. Is it perhaps based on the fact that our ideas will necessarily lead us into violence?

This is a charge that differs from the first one. I would give the person making that charge the benefit of the doubt and assume that his intentions are good because there are in the world information as well as intellectual agencies that have created around Islam--not the Islamic Tendency or Islam today--a brutal image. These agencies reduce Islam to a sword, and they equate "jihad" to fighting even though Islam is not a sword. The basic motto in Islam is that of justice and mercy, and "jihad" does not mean fighting; fighting is, however, only a small part of "jihad," the part that is disliked. One becomes involved in combat only under limited conditions when there is no other way to preserve the the nation's freedom and its beliefs.

About this second part I would say that fighting is not violence because violence is absolutely out of the question. According to my understanding of Islam, violence is inseparable from the notion of oppression, despotism and domination. In all cases there is no oppression, no despotism and no domination in Islam. The messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him salvation, spoke unequivocally about avoiding violence. He said, "God loves gentleness." If it is fighting that is being referred to here, fighting in Islam is also not an inevitable outcome of the principle of universality and the principle of monotheism. In my opinion linking the principle of fighting and the principle of universality seems arbitrary. This is because, as I mentioned, fighting is not desirable; it is rather disliked. "Fighting is obligatory for you, much as you dislike it" [al-Baqarah: 216].

In all cases fighting is not to be used to settle an intellectual dispute. It is God not the sword that sways people's hearts. The weapons for such an intellectual conflict are not spears, swords and bombs, but rather ideas, dialogue and persuasion. The Islamic principle is unequivocal in this regard. "There is no coercion in religion." If the matter has to do with faith and with ideas, there would be no place for violence or for fighting for that matter. Regarding the claim that totalitarian ideas, which tend to make their proponents believe they are right and others are wrong, necessarily lead to violence, let me say that this association is contrived. In fact, according to Abu Hanifah, "My opinion is correct, but it may be wrong; and another person's opinion is wrong, but it may be right." Thus, my conviction that one case is correct requires that the opposite be wrong, but that does not mean that what I hold to be correct or that the mistakes others make are absolute.

Concerning Interim Missions

[Question] Some people believe that if the regime senses danger coming from a certain direction, it tries to remove that tendency that is creating the danger and it gets rid of it by cramming its members in prisons. After a certain period of time the process of sidelining and slandering that tendency takes place. As time goes by, this process becomes more pronounced. Then those in that tendency are released with the regime knowing beforehand that this movement would be returning to public life in a fragmented and weakened condition. Experience has shown this to have happened to the leftist tendency. The question I am asking is a question in two parts.

--Is this belief in the ranks of the Islamic Tendency true?

--What is your view of the near political future for the Islamic Tendency Movement?

[Answer] Regarding the first part of the question, it would be enough to make a few references here to our movement. I would say that despite the bitterness of this prison experience and despite its psychological and social drawbacks, we were blessed with the grace of God. He turned this operation to what I think has been a major victory for Islam. The prison term did truly constitute a major shift in the movement. It is a shift to an important stage that may place the movement on the road to victory. It is my opinion that the movement's reputation now is much better than it was before we were imprisoned. The people are rallying around the movement and are honoring it. In the minds of some people it is linked with the hope of getting Tunisian society out of its crisis. Also if we were to take another important sector of the movement, which is the student sector, I would think that this experience--the experience of the Islamic Tendency at the university--made a significant contribution in the past 3 years to remove the suspicion that had surrounded the movement and to place the movement in a suitable and an important place in Tunisian society. In fact, I think that the number of Muslims has grown. Let me summarize by saying that our situation after our imprisonment is better in many aspects than the situation before imprisonment. Despite its drawbacks, that predicament was a blessing. Thanks go to God first; then to the Muslim people of Tunisia and then to all the free forces and the people of conscience inside the country and abroad.

The second part of the question: We have grieved and are still grieving because some of our colleagues are still in prison: (al-Daghbuji) and Fathi Abroug. Although we were co-defendants in the same case, we went out of prison and left them behind. Much of the joy over our release was lost, particularly when we got out of prison and found their families waiting for them. I believe that releasing these two colleagues and permitting the rest of our colleagues who are homeless abroad to return to their homeland is a matter that should be settled now that the leaders of the Islamic Tendency are out of prison.

The problem that the movement is facing today is that of reuniting all its members so that all of them can determine their suitable place among the political and social forces in the country. The movement has to define the method and the substance of the contribution it will make in determining the future of the country.

The matter goes beyond that. What is required is statutory amnesty that would provide for the release of all prisoners without exception.

[Question] Do you have a final observation you would like to say to conclude this interview?

[Answer] In concluding this interview I would like to correct some positions. I would like to correct some of what has been said about us as a movement or as inmates. There may have been rumors or statements from unreliable sources such as those which mentioned that I was a party in some negotiations, that some messages were sent from prison or that concessions were made by the movement to

the regime. There is no basis for truth in any of this. I think such news is based on unfaithful reporting of the news to local and foreign newspapers even though we have no doubts about the importance of what these newspapers did to support our cause. We are grateful to all political and media forces and all those who played a part in bringing about this release. We think that this step will be completed only when a public statutory amnesty is issued so that all the energies of the country can be used to help get it out of its crisis. Thanks.

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LEBANESE POLITICAL LEADER DEMANDS LIBERATION OF SOUTH

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[Interview with Anis Sa'd, secretary general of the Democratic Socialist Party: "Leaving the Liberation of South Lebanon Up To the South Lebanese Would Mean Martyrdom for South Lebanon and Suicide for the South Lebanese!"; date and place of interview not specified]

[Text] In Geneva and Lausanne we released the international community from its responsibilities regarding Lebanon.

The Democratic Socialist Party, the head of which is Mr Kamil al-As'ad, president of the National Assembly, is now no longer remaining silent and is stating the positions which the party has taken with regard to the issues of the day via this interview with Mr Anis Sa'd, the secretary general of the party. This interview reveals the fact that the party is adamant concerning its position with regard to the 17 May agreement and considers that it has become senseless to talk about it any longer. Furthermore, the party demands that the government establish a serious and practical plan which would guarantee the liberation of South Lebanon, and the party believes that this cannot be brought about unless there is mutual understanding and coordination with the Arab nations, especially Syria.

[Question] We notice the Democratic Socialist Party's adherence to the agreement of 17 May. Does the party still support this position which it has taken? What is the means that the party feels can be used to liberate South Lebanon?

[Answer] It is a striking fact that the Arab mentality which has been the cause of our defeats so far--the numerous tragedies that we have had to suffer ever since 1948--is still the mentality that has the upper hand in our arena. This mentality has become such that it is now causing everyone to fear for the future and is arousing the anger of the masses as far as human, national, and Arab issues are concerned. Is it reasonable for us to accept the claim that a Lebanese national victory and a victory for the Arabs has been achieved merely because the 17 May agreement has been abrogated? The really important question is the following: Have we eliminated any of the Israeli occupation of South Lebanon by abrogating the 17 May agreement?

Or have we been content merely to display hostility toward Israel by doing away with something that is nothing more than an agreement? Whatever flaws the agreement may have had, it was still better than not dealing with the Israeli occupation at all--and this approach of not dealing with it at all is the one which today guides the national policy of Lebanon and the policy of the Arabs.

No matter what some people may say about the Democratic Socialist Party in their propaganda campaigns and wars of words, our party has never been in favor of the 17 May agreement as such. In fact, our party has been, and still is, in favor of liberating South Lebanon. The basis of our party's position is the fact that the aim of our party is to liberate South Lebanon. This has been asserted many times by the head of our party, Mr Kamil al-As'ad, who is president of the National Assembly. When objections were being raised about the 17 May agreement, and before this agreement was dropped, Mr al-As'ad stated that he was fully prepared to tear up the 17 May agreement if there were any serious and practical alternative for obtaining the liberation of South Lebanon.

It has been said that it is useless and senseless to talk about the 17 May agreement because this agreement has become part of history after having been abrogated and that it was no secret that Israel did not sincerely intend to implement the agreement. But now that the 17 May agreement has been abrogated, is it right for the Lebanese government and the Arabs to pursue a policy of non-decision as far as the Israeli occupation is concerned--as if they had been hostile merely toward the agreement rather than toward the Israeli occupation itself?

We in the Democratic Socialist Party demand that there be both a policy and a plan which would serve to oppose Israel's ambitions in South Lebanon. We demand that such a plan reflect a national policy which is adopted by the government and we demand that this policy, at the same time, be an Arab policy to be followed particularly by the nations directly engaged in the Arab-Israeli struggle--particularly Syria. The 17 May agreement now is over and done with, but South Lebanon is still occupied, the fate of Lebanon is still being threatened, and the cause of the Arabs, in turn, is still in retreat before the onslaught of the Israelis. Our question is: What happened to our policy of resistance, and what has this policy been?

Has this policy been that of handing South Lebanon over to Israel on a silver platter--which is what is happening today?

Has the policy been one of having a people's liberation war be waged merely by the people of South Lebanon--with the other Lebanese and the Arabs not participating--as some people are saying?

The people of South Lebanon have rejected the Israeli occupation and their rejection of this occupation has been such that, for years, they have been dying while defending their territory, their homeland, and their dignity. However, this does not constitute the entire battle which is being waged against Israel. South Lebanon is an important and fundamental location

involved in this battle, but in order for this battle to be a practical and serious one, it must be a battle which is waged by the Arabs in general. This is something which can only be done by means of a united Arab strategy, the core of which would be a Lebanese national policy which would put the potential of the Lebanese government and the entire Lebanese people at the service of the struggle for liberation.

Does this policy mean having security arrangements which would guarantee that South Lebanon would once again be subject to Lebanese national sovereignty?

Yes, it does. However, where is the orientation which would bring about the achievement of this objective?

Does this policy mean unilateral security arrangements, as the government leaders have previously stated? Is this something which can be forced through against the will of Israel?

If this is possible, then this means that we are capable of once and for all expelling Israel from South Lebanon. Why, then, are we content merely to establish security arrangements with Israel? Or are the people in favor of this approach depending on the Israelis being virtuous, not permitting themselves to violate the rights of others, and withdrawing in embarrassment as soon as they realize that they are in Lebanese territory which does not belong to them?

If, in order to bring these arrangements about, it is necessary to either directly or indirectly negotiate with Israel in order to establish a security agreement with that country, then why are we hiding our faces, not calling a spade a spade, and not saying that we are attempting to achieve a new and alternative security agreement with Israel? If the Lebanese government has indirect means of achieving such security arrangements, then why has it not utilized them since a number of leaders have been saying that the U.S., which was entrusted with this task, still refuses to really accept it?

The Democratic Socialist Party demands that the government establish a serious and practical plan which would guarantee bringing about the liberation of South Lebanon. This is something which can only be brought about by means of total coordination and mutual understanding with the Arab nations directly involved in this struggle--especially Syria.

As long as there is no orientation such as this, and as long as such a plan has not been established, this means that the approach we follow in order to achieve the liberation of South Lebanon is one which is following a course which holds no hope for our achieving this liberation. Consequently, our party finds itself unable to go along with such an approach.

Liberation Must Be an Arab Decision

[Question] The people of South Lebanon right now are suffering from the yoke of occupation, and South Lebanon has more or less become another West Bank. Some political and religious leaders are calling for the people of Lebanon to

put up national resistance and eliminate this yoke of occupation. What comments do you have concerning this matter? What is your assessment of the current state of affairs in South Lebanon in view of current apprehensions?

[Answer] When we of the Democratic Socialist Party define the means by which South Lebanon is to be liberated, we base our definition on the degree to which these means are capable of achieving the goal of liberation. The struggle for freedom is always a struggle for freedom, whether the means used to gain that freedom is one's sword, one's tongue, or one's heart. The decision to achieve the liberation of South Lebanon by military means can only be a decision made by the Arabs as a whole!

So far such a decision or policy has not seen the light of day. In the event that there is such a decision to liberate South Lebanon, the normal position taken by the South Lebanese which must be in line with this decision will have to be the position that they will fight. The decision to have the South Lebanese be in the arena of the armed confrontation must be one of the important basic principles of the relevant Lebanese national and pan-Arab policy--but it cannot constitute the entire policy. As members of the Democratic Socialist Party, our sense of duty and honor makes it imperative that we be in the forefront of those who die for the cause in the event that such a serious and comprehensive policy is brought into being. But when the Arabs from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf are felt to no longer have any responsibility, when the Lebanese government and people as a whole are no longer felt to be responsible, and when we place the responsibility on the shoulders of the South Lebanese alone--and on the shoulders of the Shiites in particular--this can only mean suicide for the South Lebanese and martyrdom for South Lebanon. The Palestinians also met this fate, and the reason was that they had to fight themselves because there did not exist the necessary and required pan-Arab policy and decision to help them.

If there is anyone to be blamed for preferring the approach of keeping silent, it is the Lebanese government and the Arabs as a whole. The blame should not be placed at the door of South Lebanon--which does not want to commit suicide.

There are people here and there--and people from different countries and areas which sometimes fight and hate each other--who are egging on the South Lebanese to wage their unequal battle with Israel. I am sure that these people know what the results of this type of appeal have been after it has been put into practice. These results have amounted to the fact that South Lebanon has been evacuated and definitely stripped away from Lebanon without there being any practical possibility of putting an end to this process. When these are the results, what possible national or pan-Arab interest could there be in recommending this action?

Opposition to Geneva and Lausanne

[Question] The party has been alone in its rejection of the decisions made by the recent Lausanne conference dealing with returning the Lebanese army to its barracks and concerning sectarian bases and premises for political reform

at the time, and one particular reason for this attitude on the part of the party was the fact that the discussions which took place did not deal with the matter of South Lebanon. One could consider this position to be different from most of the political positions [taken by the party]. What are your comments concerning this?

[Answer] We not only rejected the results achieved at the conferences in Geneva and Lausanne. We were also against the motto under which the Geneva and Lausanne conferences were held--that is, we were against the principle which states that Lebanon's tragedy is the result of an intra-Lebanese dispute concerning political and constitutional reforms. When the government, before the Geneva and Lausanne conferences, decided to form a ministerial committee to deal with reaching an accord, Mr al-As'ad refused to receive the committee or hold a dialogue with it. The reason he did this was that he did not want to lend his support to the mistaken principle that the problem is merely an internal Lebanese one and involves no [outside] plot against Lebanon. At this point, my question is: Who is benefiting from the Geneva and Lausanne conferences? How have these two conferences promoted the process of saving Lebanon and regaining South Lebanon?

First of all, the crux of the matter is the fact that the results of these two conferences did not at all deal with South Lebanon--in fact, the matter of South Lebanon was not even discussed. This confirms the fact that these two conferences did not deal with Lebanon's vital national issues. Is it reasonable to have a Lebanese conference be held, with the participation of people from the other Arab nations, without a plan being established for the liberation [of South Lebanon] when the conference is dealing with the salvation of Lebanon?

Secondly, all of the international news media--particularly the Zionist American and Western media--have extracted an acknowledgment from the Lebanese and the Arabs to the effect that all of the tragedies which are going on in Lebanon are the fault of those Lebanese who attended these conferences and that, if they had no disputes concerning the necessary reforms, this would put an end to the tragedy. This is a point of view which says that Israel and the U.S. are completely innocent of the plot [against Lebanon] whose tragic chapters we have been experiencing for 10 years. If only this were all there was to the matter. By following this course of action, and doing so from the forum of the Geneva and Lausanne conferences, we have absolved the international community of its responsibilities toward Lebanon and have thrown the responsibilities on each other's shoulders and defined our problems as being merely problems involving rights, privileges, and demands which have solidified and confirmed the personality and nature of the religious sects on confessional bases--regardless of the overall umbrella which shelters these religious sects. Is this umbrella the umbrella of unity and the umbrella of Lebanon, or is it the umbrella of fragmentation and the umbrella of Israeli hegemony? The indication of the answer is to be found in the priorities which were dealt with by the conference. At the conference, it was considered that these rights took precedence over the battle for liberation--which is the basis for solving the problem. The

question which suggests itself at this point is the following: How is it that most of the parties involved are alleging that Israel's aims involve sectarian fragmentation in Lebanon, and then these parties proceed to make their demands from their sectarian and confessional points of view instead of adopting a sound Lebanese position which would favor all Lebanese citizens?

Thirdly, with regard to the decision which was taken in Lausanne concerning bringing the army back to its barracks, this is a decision which arouses suspicion because it means that it will be impossible to reestablish Lebanon as a state. How can one have a state or a government with the authority to impose its laws when there exists no effective means of implementing security--especially during the exceptional circumstances which Lebanon is experiencing right now? When one says that the Lebanese army has a number of flaws, this suggests the following question: Should one eliminate the only possibility which there is for reestablishing Lebanon as a state merely on the pretext of this possibility not being a wholly sound one? In other words, should one reject the nation of Lebanon on the pretext that the structure of the Lebanese army is not sound? Therefore, when one makes the decision to thwart the actions of the army and abolish the role that it plays, does this not necessarily mean entrusting the sectarian militias with the tasks normally assigned to the army? Would this not mean that an extremely dangerous step has been taken which leads toward the fragmentation and partition of Lebanon? Would the application of the decisions made at the Lausanne conference concerning the Lebanese army serve the cause of unity? Even when they wanted to rally around this policy, they broke up the army into the various militia units which have authority over the army rather than the other way around. This is something which promotes the plot which aims at achieving the actual partition of Lebanon.

Now that each religious sect has its own army and the nation of Lebanon is the only institution which has remained without an army, the following important question suggests itself: Which sectarian army is going to implement the security arrangements which are supposed to be carried out in South Lebanon in case agreement is reached concerning them?

Reform

[Question] What is the position of the party with regard to the reforms which have been proposed?

[Answer] We in the Democratic Socialist Party are in favor of any reform, whether the reform is political, constitutional, social, educational, etc. In fact, we are the first ones who demanded such reforms. But we do not believe that this reform should be given priority over the battle for liberation and at the expense of Lebanon as a nation. What would be the value of having reform--any reform--if South Lebanon becomes Israel's North Bank? What would be the value of having reform if there would no longer be the Lebanon which is supposed to have this reform? If we are to have reform, then Lebanon must survive. Some people say that Lebanon must have reform in order to be able to survive, but this is not the case. Reform for Lebanon is an internal problem, whereas the survival of Lebanon is something which must be achieved

in the form of a response to a foreign plot. We cannot, for example, claim that modifying Lebanon's system of elections is something that will bring about the liberation of South Lebanon. The liberation of South Lebanon remains a national, pan-Arab, and international responsibility, whether Lebanon's election laws are sound or unsound.

We are in favor of all reforms, and the battle to achieve reforms should not stop. The only stipulation that we make is that these reforms should not weaken or take priority over the struggle to liberate South Lebanon. How will things turn out if we concentrate only on the struggle to achieve reforms and necessarily see ourselves forced to ignore the battle to liberate South Lebanon--as is happening today?

We go along with those people who are in favor of the various types of reforms. We are also in favor of all religious sects being dealt with fairly. The Shiite sect is the most underprivileged religious sect in many ways. We have taken a number of positions in this regard. Nevertheless, we do not agree that the struggle to eliminate the deprivation of [one sect's] rights should lead to an even greater deprivation which would afflict all of the religious sects. The deprivation which I have in mind here is the fact that we would all lose our united nation of Lebanon. The battle to eliminate deprivation is a national struggle and is a duty, but it must accompany and support the struggle to liberate South Lebanon and not take precedence over this liberation struggle. Justice for all of the religious sects is something which will bring the citizens of Lebanon--no matter what religious sect they belong to--up to the level of being sound Lebanese citizens and this is something which will result in the people in the ranks of a united nation having a sound and coherent unified structure.

Campaign for the Presidency of the National Assembly

[Question] How does your party view the campaign for the presidency of the National Assembly?

[Answer] We have never considered the presidency of the National Assembly to be a government position which we have striven for. In fact, we have considered this position to be one to give the holder of this position the opportunity to engage in sound national decision-making and to defend such sound decisions. This has been confirmed by the actions of Mr Kamil al-As'ad all during the period of time that he has exercised his duties as president of the National Assembly. He has made this position a type of safety valve for the sake of the unity of the Lebanese nation. I do not believe that anyone can deny the fact that the National Assembly is the only national institution which has not been manipulated and influenced by the plot [against Lebanon from outside]. In all humility and pride, we would like to say that Mr al-As'ad's conscientious, responsible, and patriotic exercise of his duties when guiding and leading this institution is what has provided this institution with the role that it plays and has allowed it to remain the only source for the continuation of the legitimate Lebanese government. This institution is still the target of the plot against Lebanon--which seeks to put an end to the last stubborn and unifying stronghold which is resisting the

plot to fragment Lebanon. As far as we are concerned, this is how we view the position of the presidency of the National Assembly. No one will be able to impair the soundness of this national position of ours, whether we occupy the seat of the presidency of the National Assembly or not. It is to the credit of the position of the presidency of the National Assembly that Mr Kamil al-As'ad has transformed it into a position which follows a national policy and point of view and involves a great responsibility which transcends the cult of personalities.

Something to Look Forward To Or Not?

[Question] Some people are looking forward to the end of the role played by Mr al-As'ad. What are your comments concerning this?

[Answer] This reflects a philosophy of falsification and a philosophy of the gun which is what is paralyzing the will of the Lebanese people today. I do not think that the Lebanese in general and the South Lebanese in particular are looking forward to seeing Kamil al-As'ad cease being president of the National Assembly. When this actually comes to pass, it will be tantamount to being an obituary for the effort to have a conscientious national policy for Lebanon and efforts to insure the future of Lebanon and South Lebanon in particular. The leadership which Mr al-As'ad exercises is something which transcends the person of Mr al-As'ad himself. In fact, his leadership today represents a national trend followed by people who, throughout the time of Lebanon's tribulations, have refused to be accomplices to the plot against Lebanon. In fact, these people have chosen to be in the very location where this plot has inflicted its many blows.

We in South Lebanon, who are following our democratic and national course and policy under the leadership of Kamil al-As'ad, have endured--and are still enduring--oppression at the hands of the soldiers of many nationalities, and this oppression has grown and developed under the aegis of the plot against South Lebanon. We have not deviated from our path, we have refused to carry weapons, and we have counted on the weapon represented by the force of law and the force of the legitimate government authority in order to avoid being victims of the plot. To all those who, with their bullets which they have not paid for and with their young men whose wages they are not paying, say that they are stronger than we are and that they are more effective in the field, we say the following: Everybody knows that those who are victorious in South Lebanon today and in Lebanon generally are those who are behind the plot which has the objective of fragmenting our nation. We are the defeated ones according to this criterion because we, in fact, do not possess any capability of slaughtering and tearing apart our nation. This is something which we have rejected, and we will continue to reject this.

Our consistent refusal to reach for our guns is a refusal to take part in the plot. Every rifle in the hands of a soldier who does not represent the legitimate government in the real sense of the word--that is, the legitimacy of justice and the sovereignty of law--is necessarily transformed into an instrument of tyranny and oppression and consequently cannot serve the policy of bringing about the salvation of Lebanon. In fact, such a rifle in the hands of such a soldier will result in Lebanon turning into rubble.

We are the defeated ones as long as Lebanon is a defeated nation, and we will only be victorious when Lebanon is victorious. He who stands today on top of corpses should not claim victory. Real victory is something which cannot be conceived of unless South Lebanon is regained and Lebanon is turned into a united, capable, and just nation.

When the people of a nation evaluate a political course of action, they stipulate above all that this course of action, in order to be a sound one, must take place in an atmosphere of democracy which is safe from physical and intellectual terrorism. What has happened to this democracy today?

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PHALANGISTS TO CONTINUE POLICY OF LATE LEADER

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[Article by Nabil Barakis: "After the Death of Pierre al-Jumayyil: The Phalangists Will Continue As a United Party With a Single Voice and a United Voice"]

[Text] Salah Matar explains the challenges faced by the party after the death of its founder.

He died while he was still dreaming of finding an answer to a question of his, which was: What kind of Lebanon do we want? But when everyone else had lost hope that Lebanon would be united once again and had lost hope that Lebanon's political formula, which was unique in the world, would be revived, he said the following, and said it openly and for all to hear: "I, Pierre al-Jumayyil, am still counting on Lebanon and I am still convinced that Lebanon is a united country with a united people. We have felt that no price is too high to pay for the sake of Lebanon." Now that Pierre al-Jumayyil has died, the question is: What kind of Lebanon will the Lebanese Phalangists work toward achieving? What will become of the Phalangist Party after the death of Pierre al-Jumayyil? Perhaps the most important question is the following: What will things be like in Lebanon after the death of Pierre al-Jumayyil?

Phalangist Party sources say that the period of time after the death of Pierre al-Jumayyil will be a time of challenges because administrative and practical action is far more important than a lot of words and emotions. The Phalangist Party, during its various successive meetings, has asserted that it will continue to act in the spirit of the great man who has just passed away and the party has pledged to remain united, to continue to speak with a united voice, to follow a united policy, to maintain a united spirit, and to continue to follow the teachings and principles of its leader and to put all of them into practice.

Dr Elie Karamah, vice president of the Phalangist Party, told AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI what he had already said to the members of the Central Council and the Political Bureau, which was the following: "We are going through a difficult period of time during which all eyes, both from abroad and from

inside Lebanon, are on the Phalangist Party. Some people are expecting the party to continue as before, and others are expecting it to stumble. Everyone is watching carefully."

He went on to say: "It is true that no one can take the place of Pierre al-Jumayyil, follow in his great footsteps as the leader of this national institution, or fill the vacuum that he has left. But, in response to all of the questions posed by members of the party, people in Lebanon, Arabs from the other Arab nations, and people from all over the world, I can safely say that the Phalangist Party, which was founded by the great Pierre al-Jumayyil, is a party which is on very firm and solid foundations and is a party which will continue to act in a way which is inspired by Pierre al-Jumayyil and will fill the vacuum that he has left behind."

This statement by Dr Karamah, then, represents a response to people who had been asking: "What will happen now that Pierre al-Jumayyil has passed away?" But the practical response, according to Phalangist Party sources, will be the implementation of the teachings of Pierre al-Jumayyil. The Phalangist Party faces some very serious challenges, and they are the following:

1. Will the party be able to reorganize itself after the fragmentation which it has recently suffered?
2. How much help will the party be receiving from President Amin al-Jumayyil?
3. To what degree will the army adhere to the nation's political policy?

In addition to all of this, the party faces opposition both at home and abroad. Political parties in the Arab world generally are exposed to danger and to attacks when their founders die. The situation for the Phalangist Party today is even more dangerous because it has to deal with an extremely violent attack and a very vicious assault at a time when it is in a position of responsibility and in a position of determining policy.

Phalangist Party sources have revealed to AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI the fact that the party has concerned itself with all of these questions which have been posed and admits that there is a great vacuum which has been left behind by the death of Pierre al-Jumayyil. For this reason, the party has decided to give itself some time in order to establish new principles and plans as well as a new strategy for action. Previously the party's policy was, to some degree, set by only one individual, but now the policies in the future will be made by the [collective] leadership of the party. It used to be that Pierre al-Jumayyil assumed all the vital responsibilities himself and took it upon himself to make all the vital decisions. Today the party faces another challenge--the fact that its protective cover has been taken away. Furthermore, the Phalangist Party today is on the front lines without the al-Jumayyil family because Bashir al-Jumayyil was assassinated, Amin al-Jumayyil became the president of Lebanon, and Pierre al-Jumayyil has passed away.

In addition to the above, the death of Pierre al-Jumayyil serves to bring up a number of questions which concern the members of the Phalangist Party, people engaging in politics, persons in the Lebanese Front, Christians, Lebanese, Arabs, and people throughout the world.

Salah Matar

Mr Salah Matar, an attorney who is a member of the Phalangist Party's Political Bureau, gave answers to some of these questions, and they were as follows:

"After an enormously important event of this sort which is tantamount to being a national calamity, the following momentous question suggests itself: What is the fate of an institution after the death of its founder, and what is the fate of a mission after the death of its missionary and apostle? The challenge is then handed down from the teacher and leader to his disciples and followers. Pierre al-Jumayyil was a man behind whom there was an institution which was creating history. The challenge today is for this institution to continue to make history. I am not betraying any secret when I say that Pierre al-Jumayyil was worried about the fate of the Phalangist Party after his death, and he was so concerned about this because the existence of the party is organically linked to the nation of Lebanon and its future. There are two things which are filling the huge vacuum left behind by the death of this great individual-- the eternal memory of this great individual and the spirit of challenge being demonstrated by the Phalangists. Pierre al-Jumayyil was a man who met challenges, and the history of modern Lebanon, for the last 50 years, has known no other man who had Pierre al-Jumayyil's degree of presence during all the momentous events which took place and during all the twists and turns of Lebanese history which have taken place ever since before the time of Lebanon's independence.

"My opinion is that the challenges which face the Phalangist Party after the death of its leader are the following:

"As far as the party is concerned, the question is: Will the party continue to follow the policy of its founder and leader, and will it continue to possess a dynamic ideology, will it continue to be well organized, will its members remain loyal, and will the party remain a creative one? This is a real challenge, because most, if not all, parties in Lebanon have to a great degree been affected by the death of their leaders or founders. In this regard, one can safely say that the Phalangist Party possesses a well-developed organizational structure. The Political Bureau has already said that it will continue with the policy of the party's founder and will continue to be inspired by his principles and the positions which he took. We believe that there is no reason to fear for the party in this regard. The party will continue to act as an institution which is highly organized, possesses a broad popular base as far as its cadres are concerned, and is firmly linked to the central government."

With regard to the fate of the 1943 National Covenant formula now that Pierre al-Jumayyil has passed away, Mr Matar said: "As you know, Pierre al-Jumayyil

was one of the founders of modern Lebanon, and he also helped to create the National Covenant and the political system based on it. Pierre al-Jumayyil--may God rest his soul--always believed that Lebanon should retain all the 10,452 square kilometers of its territory and should never lose a single Lebanese citizen. He also went so far as to believe in the philosophy that Lebanon represents a unique cultural blend of people representing various religions. My opinion is that this unique model could serve as a pioneering ideal for the whole world when it comes to solving the problems of coexistence involving the world's different religions, peoples, and cultures. For this reason, the issue of Lebanon has become an issue of historical and international dimensions since Lebanon has served as a model for interaction in pluralistic societies and has served as a framework and means of achieving peace and unity in a pluralistic nation. This is what has made Lebanon so unique in nature and internationalist in character. Pierre al-Jumayyil stressed the essence of the 1943 National Covenant formula and was a proponent of developing this National Covenant formula in both a creative and a responsible way which would not be detrimental to the spirit of this formula. It was his opinion that, if Lebanon were transformed into a nation characterized by sectarianism and ethnic federalism, based on separating segments of the population from each other, this would lead to the creation of separately administered districts once again as well as to the creation of fiefs and provinces which would constitute "ghettoes" which would be mutually exclusive, would harp on each other, and would hate each other. He felt that this is something which would eliminate Lebanon as a nation, as a state, and as a unique cause. This is why Pierre al-Jumayyil stressed the necessity of developing the nation's internal organization--in order to provide security, freedom, and justice for the people of all of Lebanon's religions without this being detrimental to either the unity of Lebanon or the special characteristics of the Lebanese people's various religious sects.

"As far as I know, Pierre al-Jumayyil's will is one which has not been written down. Nevertheless, it is well known that what he wanted is for Lebanon to be preserved as a nation and for Lebanon to keep the political system which is appropriate for it."

Concerning the question of how the absence of Pierre al-Jumayyil will affect the Lebanese government and its legitimate authority, Mr Matar said: "As we know, Pierre al-Jumayyil always insisted upon the existence of legitimate authority. He always used to say, even during the darkest days of the civil war, that there was no alternative to the legitimate Lebanese government. For decades now we have known that there are three institutions which must not be tampered with, otherwise Lebanon would be exposed to danger. These institutions are the presidency of the republic, the army, and the judiciary. We all know how costly it has been for Lebanon to have its legitimate government damaged--especially the three above-mentioned institutions.

"On Friday 31 August 1984, during the Phalangist Party's first meeting since the death of its founder and under the chairmanship of its vice president, Dr Elie Karamah, the party adopted a position which stated its adherence to Pierre al-Jumayyil's principles and ideas and indicated that it would draw its

inspiration from his national, political, and party policy. This position also indicates that the Phalangists will continue to back the legitimate government authority and will continue to give its full support to the president of the republic as well as to all those persons who represent him as the head of the legitimate government authority. The party hopes that all of this will enable the legitimate government to save, liberate, and unite Lebanon. The party intends to support the president of the republic because he is the one entrusted with defending all of these values and promoting the vital national causes of Lebanon." Concerning how the absence of Pierre al-Jumayyil will affect the situation in the government, he said: "One can safely say that there is no one who can take the place of Pierre al-Jumayyil. However, from the legal and constitutional point of view, one can solve the problem either by means of appointing a minister having the two portfolios which Pierre al-Jumayyil had or by means of expanding the government. As Prime Minister Karami has said, the positive nature of the Phalangist Party will not change with the passing of its leader. As far as the Lebanese Front is concerned, the Political Bureau, during its session of Monday 3 September 1984, entrusted Dr Karamah with the task of attending the meetings of the Lebanese Front since the Phalangist Party is greatly concerned about the Lebanese Front and wishes to have the Lebanese Front both maintain its strength and continue to develop.

"There remains another challenge--which is that of liberating Lebanon and the citizens of Lebanon. Pierre al-Jumayyil believed in Lebanon and believed that Lebanon should be, above all, a nation of freedom and that its territory and its citizens should be free. This means that we should never conceive of the Lebanon of Pierre al-Jumayyil as being a nation which is not free. In this regard, there are two things which must go hand in hand--the liberation of Lebanon and the liberation of its citizens. Unless both Lebanon and its citizens are liberated, the essence of Lebanon will be lost and Lebanon will no longer be the embodiment of its best concepts and qualities."

We said to Salah Matar: "Pierre al-Jumayyil represented the Christians--especially the Maronites. What effect will his absence have on the Maronite community and the politics of the Maronites?"

He answered: "Actually we are not members of the Phalangist Party because we belong to a given religious sect. Our party is one which is based on ideology and patriotism. The 5,000 people from the Phalangist Party and the Lebanese Forces who gave their lives did so for the sake of Lebanon as a nation and a cause rather than for the sake of this or that religious sect. In any case, the great vacuum created by the death of Pierre al-Jumayyil is one which is being filled by his memory and by the Phalangist Party as an institution--with all of its personnel and its manpower."

Concerning the position and role of Amin al-Jumayyil, the president of the republic--since Amin al-Jumayyil, if he were not president of the republic, would normally be the one to fill the vacuum created by the death of Pierre al-Jumayyil--Mr Matar said: "Of course, the president of the republic, by virtue of the constitution and the present situation as we know it, is a person who is above all parties and party activities because he is the

president of the republic and is the leader of all Lebanese. Because of our present situation, it is both normal and logical for the Phalangist Party to be at the disposal of the legitimate government and to give its full support to the legitimate government and to the president of the republic since the national and vital challenges which Lebanon and its government must deal with are such that this large-scale support is something which must be provided. As we have already indicated, both our higher interest and our vital causes make it imperative for us to give our full support."

He went on to say: "As far as the composition of the government is concerned, the cabinet has already appointed Joseph al-Hashim as the minister who will succeed Pierre al-Jumayyil. Both the party and the government consider Mr al-Hashim to be a disciple and follower of Pierre al-Jumayyil. He was with Pierre al-Jumayyil in the ranks of the party and during the time he served in the government, and he stayed by Pierre al-Jumayyil's side during hard times. As one of the prominent members of our party has said, Mr al-Hashim is a person who is not only a Phalangist, the head of the al-Shuf area, and the director general of the Voice of Lebanon radio station. He is also a person who was a disciple and follower of Pierre al-Jumayyil and who was, to a certain degree, his spokesman."

As far as party affairs are concerned, Phalangist sources have indicated that the Political Bureau may soon make a number of important decisions, the most significant of which will concern the election of the party's president and vice president in accordance with Article 18 of the party's constitution--unless the Political Bureau decides to amend this article.

9468

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NABIH BIRRI INTERVIEWED ON AMERICAN MEDIATION

London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic No 1457, 5 Oct 84 p 20

/Interview with Nabih Birri in New York: "AL-HAWADITH in New York with Lebanese Question; Nabih Birri: 'American Mediation Moving Along'"; date not specified/

/Text/ The new thing in the question of southern Lebanon is meeting the wishes of all concerned parties and the two great powers to carry out Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon after dropping the preconditions which the Israelis attached to their withdrawal, mainly the matter of simultaneous Syrian withdrawal. However, the details of carrying out this principle threatens to foil the objective if opinions are to harden, the Israeli stances particularly.

Israel has two options: the first calls for quick withdrawal and the other says that withdrawal must yield some political returns for the Israeli government.

As for the U.S., it does not wish to get involved in a diplomatic and political operation with uncertain results. The Reagan administration, however, at the same time does not want to appear to be shirking its responsibilities, hence Richard Murphy's fact-finding visit to a number of area capitals.

Washington's decision was to try to avoid reviving the Lebanese question before the American presidential elections next November, particularly since the word "Lebanon" brings to the mind of the American voter the death of the marines, an issue interpreted by the Democratic Party as a dismal failure of the Republican administration. Consequently, it is expected that the U.S. will not resume its active and open role of mediation unless Washington was guaranteed results. That is why the UN is making endeavors to deal with the practical details of filling the vacuum that will be created by an Israeli withdrawal through international channels, with the concerned targets in the area in hopes of paving the way for a political agreement instead of being swept away in political mazes. This new UN role is acceptable on the Lebanese, Syrian, Israeli, American and Soviet levels.

Israel's abandonment of its preconditions includes the absence of a proviso for Lebanon's political acceptance of Israel via direct talks. The Israelis are now asking for meetings with the Lebanese at a military level to crown the security accords under negotiation. The Americans support Israel's positions, as they also support Israel's security demands, including the Antoine Lahd Army. They are pressuring the Lebanese in this direction, asking them to be flexible. With the U.S. open recognition of the legitimacy of the Syrian role in solving the problem of south Lebanon, there is a U.S.-Israeli wish to make Syria the "godfather" of security guarantees in the south.

To examine all these developments, AL-HAWADITH met in New York with Minister Nabih Birri following the contacts the Lebanese delegation, headed by Prime Minister Rashid Karami, made with the Americans and others. It also discussed the Syrian role and the American position with the Syrian foreign minister, Mr Faruq al-Shari'.

/Question/ The story began with Israeli foreign minister, Yitzhaq Shamir's statement that he was asking the U.S. to mediate with Syria to accomplish Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon, followed by Assistant Secretary of State Richard Murphy's visit to Damascus and Beirut and back to New York, then the initiation of contacts between the American Secretary of State George Shultz and several concerned parties, including the Lebanese delegation headed by PM Rashid Karami. Then suddenly, and after a promising campaign, we hear that the Americans turned down the mediation role. What is the true story?

/Answer/ The truth is that the matter started before the Americans. It started with the UN when the Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs, Brian Urquhart, visited the area and a dialogue with the Lebanese, the Syrians and other parties began on this subject. However, the Americans surprised us and the UN as well. Murphy went to the area originally as an investigator because of the bomb attack in "'Awkar," but soon embarked on exploring another matter, setting the movement in motion. The matter began assuming the form of an integrated plan composed, as I see it, of eight points. Upon our arrival in New York, we were surprised by a statement issued by the American Secretary of State George Shultz saying that the matter would take a long time and the road is long and by another statement by the official White House spokesman which said that the Americans did not wish to play the role of mediator. Regardless of these statements, however, we noticed from our meetings that this issue is still alive.

/Question/ Do you mean that during the meetings they told you something else? Did they say they wanted to mediate?

/Answer/ As far as they are concerned, they are trying to deny that the American elections have any influence on their positions and movements. In our opinion, however, they are not ready to undertake

any mediation in the old way. However, if all parties were to ask them to mediate, they are ready to accept and meet their responsibilities.

/Question/ And the parties are?

/Answer/ The Lebanese, Syrians, Israelis and everyone.

/Question/ Lebanon asked the Americans to play this role and the Israelis requested mediation. Is Syria the party that has not requested /anything/?

/Answer/ What do I care about requests. As a citizen of Lebanon, where one-third of the territory and more than one-fourth of the population are under Israeli occupation, I care that I have principles, including rejection of direct negotiations with the Israelis. Any mediation that violates these principles /as given/ and preserves Lebanese sovereignty meets with our support. We are grateful for any endeavor in this direction. Hence, the Americans are now moving at least, but not by a Lebanese initiative.

/Question/ Is this positive or negative?

/Answer/ Anything that leads to a result is positive.

/Question/ Do you perceive any American disdain for the Lebanese Government, especially since Shultz, following his meeting with the American president and with you, volunteered to say through his spokesman that the Americans did not want to mediate, but rather wanted what they called flexibility and a change of climate. Is this not a blow to the Lebanese Government?

/Answer/ I do not think they can abandon the problem since they do have a role in the original problem. They have a role in the basic cause of this problem, in the basic structure on which they built their main role with regard to this question. They influence and are influenced by the Israeli question.

/Question/ They tell us we have to change the climate; they tell us we have to demonstrate some "flexibility;" this is how they talk to us. What do they want from us? What are they asking for?

/Answer/ This is newspaper talk. As for us, we have received eight points, as I have already said. Some are acceptable, some are not and some can be discussed. The most important thing is the unacceptable ones which are two points. One has to do with the Lahd forces (South Lebanon Army) which is totally unacceptable to Lebanon and the other concerns the fashion of negotiations in the wake of Israel's abandonment, as the Americans tell us, of direct political negotiations. They say they want direct military negotiations and we insist, in this regard, on the enforcement of the truce accord. These are the two topics of dispute.

/Question/ Israel is demanding security guarantees in order to carry out its withdrawal. Frankly speaking, what guarantees can you offer as the minister of the south? For example, can you guarantee that armed Palestinians will not return to the south?

/Answer/ Let me start with the principle. I will be as frank with you as you have been with me. First, there is no legal principle that obligates one country to guarantee the security of another country, be it a neighboring one or not. This is one point that must be conceded. Second, any part of a country is under the security of this country. This means that whether Israel is present in Palestine or not, I am responsible for Lebanon's security. Security in the south, just as in Tripoli, Bifaya, Beirut and any other spot, is a Lebanese responsibility. This is in principle and is consistent with international law and the nature of things and developments. If we were to go by the theory contained in the question, I can say that the U.S. itself or the USSR itself figures in the scope of Israeli security. Why? Because the U.S. may have a rocket that can reach Israel or somewhere else. This is from the legal aspect. As for reality, Israel has an international duty to give up land it occupied. This means that the Israelis must leave Lebanon in accordance with the UN resolutions. How can Lebanon's security be ensured then? The number is linked to the facts at hand. There are at least two Lebanese army brigades able to go to the south. There are international emergency forces, 5,000 troops strong. So, when we want to implement Resolution 425 of 1978, we can go back to the Security Council to request that these forces be reinforced and made more effective. In this way, and by simple arithmetic, we find that there are at least 20,000 troops, between international emergency forces and Lebanese forces, able to have a presence in the south, western Biqa' and Pashzyya. If the Israelis feel this is not enough, let me ask a rhetorical question: if this is not enough, how can the Lahd army, which has 1,400 elements and is opposed by the people, be enough?

/Question/ Press reports and analyses say that the Israelis cannot at present depend on the Lahd army as they did on the Sa'd Haddad army when they withdrew in 1978, so what--

/Answer/ On the contrary. Before PM Rashid Karami and I came to the U.S. and before we began our contacts and intensified our action, one main condition was the Israeli insistence that Lahd undertake this obligation. We must always learn from history for the Israelis did the same thing with Haddad in 1978.

/Question/ This is in fact the essence of my question. Do the Israelis insist on the Lahd army because they intend to use it as they did the Haddad army or is it a maneuver to get something else?

/Answer/ The only thing they will get from the Lebanese is new resistance. And I say openly that I am an integral part of this national resistance which I represent.

/Question/ There has been talk about Syrian guarantees that the Israelis ultimately want the Syrian weight in such guarantees. In Golan, for example, there is an iron grip over the situation that allows neither penetration nor infiltration. Consequently, everyone is at ease. That is why I say that Israel seeks Syrian security guarantees.

/Answer/ It is not Syria's obligation to secure security guarantees in Lebanon. This is a Lebanese obligation. Second, ever since the abrogation of the 17 May treaty, the Syrians have used everything in their power in the way of pressure to restore unity and cohesion to Lebanon. There is no doubt that they care and are offering every possible assistance for the sake of Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon. As for securing guarantees, it is not their job.

/Question/ Can you or they guarantee that the Palestinian armed presence will not return to the south?

/Answer/ As a Lebanese, I have two points in this matter as well, and I have nothing to do with the Syrians. We also say that this is not their job with regard to the Palestinians. First, there has not been any talk by them or any agreement that the Palestinians will return. I have another rhetorical question: We have announced, as the Amal Movement and as a Lebanese government, that we will not allow the return of Palestinian arms to south Lebanon. We said that a year ago, we said it six months ago and we are saying it now. Israel is always looking for an excuse. Therefore, it is not even under consideration. We say that security in the south is a Lebanese security matter. What does this mean? /It means/ that the Lebanese guarantee their own security.

/Question/ Do you mean to say that Amal will work side by side with the Lebanese army to secure security guarantees?

/Answer/ Whether I am the Amal movement or a member of the government--and there are no two sides to a different coin--what I am saying is that security in southern Lebanon is a Lebanese responsibility, and I am not responsible for Israeli security. I am responsible for my own security and I will do my duty to the south within these rules. I do not want foreign talk about the legitimate weapon and, on this basis, I do not accept any security outside the scope of the legitimate security, keeping in mind, as you know, that disagreements do exist over the role of the army in Beirut, for instance. One may wonder how I can say this about the army in the south when there is a disagreement over the army in Beirut. The answer is very simple. After the army carries out its plan in the south, should Israel withdraw? Perhaps we can have the same situation in Beirut.

/Question/ Do you mean that the south is the key to Beirut as far as the army is concerned?

/Answer/ Of course. The problem and the strife began in the south. We used to say in our many press statements that the door closes in the south. Look at the democratic situation now. Look at the disorder in the social safety in Beirut. All this is a result of what is going on in the south.

/Question/ But Your Excellency, all of you in government are still holding your private meetings to discuss and negotiate, but, in the end, we do not learn anything from you.

/Answer/ The relative development that has occurred and the only agreement reached so far is not the ministerial communique or the apparent formulas. The only agreement reached is the unified stand in southern Lebanon, the Biqa' and Rashayya. I have said this to the president himself, that we agree on the general given regarding liberation. But with regard to the internal affair, there is still an enormous difference which we are trying to reconcile through private meetings, but unfortunately, to no avail.

/Question/ That is the reason why many people tell us that you as Lebanese talk about guaranteeing security arrangements and about the army going to the south when you are incapable of talking to each other or of reaching an agreement.

/Answer/ First, we are talking to each other, and if we wish not to agree with one another, it is not their concern. If we want to fight, "what business is it of theirs?"

/Question/ Basically, you are right. But we are working to rid our country of occupation.

/Answer/ In other words, when a mother and a daughter have a fight, where do the neighbors come in?

/Question/ I wish this were the whole story.

/Answer/ This is the story. It is that we all relied on internal bravados and Israel took heart. It is all over now and Israel must understand this fact.

/Question/ Has there been a consideration not to facilitate the Israeli withdrawal so as to prolong Israeli suffering in the south as a result of the national resistance and to teach it a lesson?

/Answer/ We have learned many lessons, but it seems that the Israelis have not learned theirs. We talk about the withdrawal plan, but we must do so with extreme caution. As the saying goes, "do not say we have the beans until they are meted out." Sometimes, a certain minor question or a certain detail can spoil the whole thing.

/Question/ What if partial Israel's withdrawal were to start now, what would happen?

/Answer/ Partial withdrawal does not lead to any results.

/Question/ The former government's position was refusal of a partial withdrawal.

/Answer/ With regard to partial withdrawal, I will not go into any detailed reply concerning it. As far as I am concerned, so long as there are 10 meters of occupied land in Lebanon, my reply is resistance.

/Question/ What will the government do in the event that Israel undertook a partial withdrawal, leaving the Lahd army behind?

/Answer/ Nothing will happen, only what is taking place now.

/Question/ Why does the Lebanese army not take in the Lahd army elements who used to be in the Lebanese army, as some have suggested?

/Answer/ I will give the same answer that PM Karami gave when he said: "If you put a rotten orange in a box of oranges, what will happen?"

/Question/ What can be done then? What is the solution to the Lahd problem?

/Answer/ Nothing. Lahd is originally from the Shuf and not the south. There was a political order at one time for joining the Lahd army. This order must be eliminated.

/Question/ Is this the way to get rid of the Lahd problem?

/Answer/ The problem is over. The Lahd problem has been terminated. There is no problem called Lahd. There is no entity called Lahd. There is an Israeli army with by-products one of which was Lahd. When the trunk goes, the branch follows.

/Question/ The trunk imposes the retention of the branch. Even the Americans talking, insisting on and pressuring Lebanon toward "flexibility." Flexibility in their book means acceptance of some security measures through Lahd. This is unacceptable to Lebanon. So, how can this knot, which is complicating matters, be unravelled?

/Answer/ These security measures through Lahd they are talking about, neither they nor anyone else believes in them. They themselves do not believe and the Israelis themselves do not believe. If three Israeli brigades plus Lahd are not able to do anything, how can Lahd alone do it?

/Question/ Let us go back to the American mediation. Is it still on?

/Answer/ The American mediation is still "moving along" and the important thing is to attain liberation.

NAJJADAH LEADER DISCUSSES RELATIONS WITH PHALANGE

London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic No 1457, 5 Oct 84 p 30

/Interview with 'Adnan al-Hakim by Sharbil Zughayb: "The Phalange Did Not Respond to Call for Alliance with the al-Najjadah; 'Adnan al-Hakim: 'I Conquered Two Regimes and Two Sulhs,'""; date and place not specified

/Text After the death of the late Shaykh Pierre al-Jumayyil and the election of Dr Elie Karamah as head of the Phalange Party, seasoned Beirut politician 'Adnan al-Hakim in his capacity as head of the al-Najjadah Party, sent out an invitation to the new head of the Phalange for an alliance between the two parties to be united under one leadership based on the principle of "Israeli defeat and liberation of the south."

To this end, al-Hakim expressed his prior approval to give the unified leadership of the Muslim party and the Christian party to the Phalange leader, repeating the attempt in 1943 when Shaykh Pierre al-Jumayyil called for an alliance between the Phalange and the al-Najjadah to resist the French mandate and attain independence.

/Question But, has your invitation to Dr Karamah met with any kind of response Mr Adnan?

/Answer ('Adnan al-Hakim said with a sigh) It appears that they remain indifferent and are determined to continue their friendship with Israel. I was expecting some kind of response from Dr Karamah to my invitation, similar to that which I received from Pierre al-Jumayyil in 1943 when our agreement had value since we were able to unite the two parties for the sake of expelling the foreigner from the country. If the Phalange truly love Lebanon, they must participate in liberating it from the Israelis and enter into a calm dialogue with all the various parties in the country. The Phalange must understand that the people want to live and that the shackles must be broken.

/Question Do you not think that the 1943 circumstances are different than those of today and that the Phalange Party is not so parochial as it used to be while the al-Najjadah Party is not as widespread as before?

/Answer/ Of course, today's circumstances are different from those of the past. However, circumstances are not measured in numbers. The issue is a matter of compatibility of vision and of a symbol in representation. We represent a party of considerable value and we cannot move if we find that the movement serves Israel and its designs which aim to dismember this country so that it can say to the whole world that any state in Palestine made up of Muslims, Christians and Jews cannot live and go on and Lebanon is the best proof of that.

/Question/ Do you not think that the al-Najjadah party is on the way to extinction?

/Answer/ Why do you say that? Do you believe that those who carry arms have a legal claim and enjoy the full support of the people and those who have built generations throughout the years must perish in the face of arms? It is an erroneous theory. Everyone believes that the armed are the ones who represent the people. This is a wrong assumption because when these circumstances disappear, they will disappear with them. The true popular parties have never resorted to arms to manifest their popularity and power. Rather, parties are measured by their opinions, debate and the way they present issues.

/Question/ How do you evaluate your personal relationship with the president of the republic?

/Answer/ I have met with him only twice so far since he assumed office. The first time he told me: "I am your son and I used to go to your house with my father ever since I was an infant." The second time, he said: "I am your younger brother and tell me what you think I should do." I told him he should have pity on this country and rectify mistakes already committed, and God forgive the past.

Not long ago, we praised his recent speech for many positivisms it contained, saying we hoped he would enforce them. Twice we had much to say about this speech and we hope he appreciates this position of ours.

/Question/ How do you evaluate your relationship with the opposition?

/Answer/ The same demands being put forth by the opposition today I demanded 30 years ago, be it with respect to abolishing political sectarianism or breaking the monopoly on the presidency. I asked that the presidency be rotated between the Christians and Muslims. I cannot help it if 22 Arab countries espouse the Muslim religion as specified by their constitutions. I am in Lebanon and not in any other country.

/Question/ You mean you differed with Shaykh Pierre over these issues?

/Answer/ He always wanted to impose his opinion on me, so I preferred to cut our discussions short. This is the way he always wanted it.

/Question/ On what did you differ?

/Answer/ On everything. I used to tell him we should abolish political sectarianism and he always used to retort, "No," adding, "we know what is intended by this. When we abolish political sectarianism from the base to the top, we will lose the presidency." I used to try to convince him of my way of thinking, saying: "Pierre, this is not democracy since true democracy is the rule of the people. If we hold a census--which I called for in 1946--we can use the outcome to set up a rule of the majority. However, I have no objection to making a side deal concerning the presidency, but to have it in the hands of the Christians exclusively, this is unacceptable to us."

"Look here son," Shaykh Pierre used to say, "this is a country of hypocrisy, hypocrits and cheats. This is a country of deceit." Today, I say this is true.

/Question/ How do you evaluate your relationship with the Muslim leaders in Beirut?

/Answer/ In the old days, 'Abdallah al-Yafi and Sa'ib Salam used to say I could not be trusted. I cannot reach a truce with the cheese eaters /i.e., self-servers/ and those in the Islamic ranks who are working for the political Maronite. I would rather go to my grave for the sake of my demands than have it said that 'Adnan al-Hakim could be trusted. At present, there is no encounter between me and Sa'ib Salam because his sole concern right now is to play up to the political Maronite. We all remember how he received Pierre al-Jumayyik at his home to the sound of music and how the musicians were surprised by his arrival, so they refused to go on playing and left in protest because Sa'ib was receiving a Pierre different from the old Pierre they knew.

/Question/ There has been a lot of talk about the political Maronite. What does it mean?

/Answer/ Political Maronite symbolizes those who want to have Lebanon exclusively for themselves as a Christian national homeland. Unfortunately, some Muslim politicians have joined this bandwagon for personal interests; they are called "the Maronite wing in the Islamic rank." Those people always want to please the regime to be able to eat cheese. If they do not eat cheese, they cannot "become prime minister." So the sectarian system suits them just fine and that is why they oppose the principle of abolishing political sectarianism.

/Question/ But Sa'ib Salam many times has refused to be prime minister.

/Answer/ Do not pay attention to such talk. However, if you are referring to the offer the president made to him at the beginning of his regime, this is something else because no reasonable person could

have accepted such an offer since any prime minister at that time had to be the obedient son of the political Maronite represented by the president and the Lebanese forces. Take Rashid Karami himself. Were it not for the circumstances created by the Geneva Conference, do you think or imagine that the political Maronite would have accepted him as prime minister?

/Question/ You mean that Prime Minister Karami is outside the scope of the political Maronite?

/Answer/ Rashid Karami is a lot better than others when it comes to acceding to the wishes of the political Maronite. But did he not eat cheese? He sure did, keeping in mind that he is my friend and my former ally in the Islamic grouping.

/Question/ Should the cabinet appoint new deputies, do you think 'Adnan al-Hakim will be one of them?

/Answer/ I refuse to be appointed. Rather, I challenge them to remove the weapons and resort to democratic parliamentary elections in order to see how popular 'Adnan al-Hakim is. I am not a man of appointment, but rather a man of election. I enter parliament through my own strength and the 1960 and 1968 elections, when Antun Sa'd and the entire Duxieme Bureau were against me and I was the only one to openly demand in the press Antun Sa'd's resignation; bear witness to that. Look here son, I am the only one who conquered the two regimes and the two Sulhs: the Camille Sham'un regime with Sami al-Sulh and the Fu'ad Shihab regime with Taqi-al-Din al-Sulh.

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NEW PHALANGE PARTY CHIEF DISCUSSES PARTY'S POSITIONS, FUTURE

Beirut AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI in Arabic No 383, 3-9 Sep 84 pp 24-27

[Interview with Elie Karamah, Phalange Party deputy chairman, by Nabil Barakis: "Dr Karamah Speaks About Phalange Affairs and Relations with Others; 'As We Thought Previously That We Triumphed, Others Are Now Thinking That They Have Triumphed'"; date and place not specified]

[Text] Editor's Note: This interview was conducted 4 days before Pierre al-Jumayyil died. Therefore, it is necessary to draw attention to some questions pertaining to Pierre al-Jumayyil's health.

Since Pierre al-Jumayyil got sick recently, the lights have been focused on the issue of his succession and, consequently, on Dr Elie Karamah, the deputy chairman of the Phalange Party, particularly since Pierre al-Jumayyil was careful to note Dr Karamah's merits while recuperating.

Here, Dr Karamah answers the questions of AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI in a general tour of the horizon:

[Question] During his recent stay in the hospital, Pierre al-Jumayyil made a statement to a sisterly paper saying: "I am preparing Dr Elie Karamah to be my successor."

[Answer] This statement was made after he left the hospital.

First, we thank God that Pierre has been able to regain his health, vigor and physical strength in all respects and that he has now resumed his role as party chairman, minister and national leader. Therefore, we thank the divine care because Lebanon is still in dire need of Pierre al-Jumayyil's leadership and his patriotic perception. We are all aware of his unsurpassable patriotic perception. God willing, we will continue to work in the party under his wise and courageous leadership for decades to come. It is certain that the statement made by Pierre al-Jumayyil is nothing but an expression of great confidence and support which will help me in my party work. I thank him for this, especially because I consider myself one of his disciples and consider him our teacher. Moreover, somebody who is my age considers himself one of al-Jumayyil's sons or younger brothers.

Optimistic

[Question] This interview with Dr Elie Karamah today has its importance, considering that Dr Karamah shoulders big responsibilities as the deputy chairman of the Phalange Party. For the first time in 36 years, one of this party's members has assumed the presidency of the republic. During the 10 years of the war, this party has fought and has prevented the fall of the legitimate government and of the regime. But something important has happened during the rule of a president from the party, namely the fall of the first cabinet and the fall of Beirut, and along with it the fall of the mountain where the Christians were defeated. This is what is being reiterated in the street. What is Dr Karamah's reply?

[Answer] The Lebanese lived a dream and thought that everything had ended and that they had scored a victory, especially the Christian faction of the Lebanese. They believed that there was a certain and final victory. Fundamentally, analyzing or describing the situation in this manner is unrealistic. The 1982 war changed numerous equations in the country. Each faction has passed through numerous phases. I will talk about us. Every faction has considered itself victorious and has believed that it has scored a victory. At the end of 1975-76, the Christians believed that they were the major victor. They also believed that they triumphed in 1982. There are other periods when the other factions considered themselves the victors. If we take a certain period of time, namely last year, which was a difficult period of the war, we cannot consider it by itself. There is the dynamic of the events which have taken place from 1975 to the present. I date the war back to 1969, the year of the Cairo agreement. Within this dynamic, we have undoubtedly passed through a very difficult year in very delicate circumstances under which the international, regional and local forces could have played a role in the Lebanese crisis -- a role which many people had expected these forces to play. Since 1975, the people have been asking: where are the French? At times, they ask: Where are the Americans? At other times, the people ask where the other forces are. All these forces have been on Lebanese soil and the result has been the events we saw last year. If we want to describe the current situation, there is no doubt that there has been a retreat. Insofar as we, as one of the forces, are concerned, we lost a battle in the mountain. Even though there has been some retreat, our situation geographically is better than what it was in 1981 when there was a very significant Palestinian presence in West Beirut and in other areas. In 1980 and 1981, there was a Syrian presence even in Sinn al-Fil, in al-Jumhur and in very close areas. The battle of Zahlah took place in 1981 and was followed by the Beirut battle, which was very difficult. Therefore, we cannot consider our strategic situation that difficult and hopeless. On the contrary, the legitimate Lebanese government has regained the initiative and is achieving success, though slowly. Despite some temporary setbacks every now and then, the government is making steady progress in establishing security. The regime has been able to form a cabinet which, despite its shortcomings, has combined disputing factions. Despite the contradictions existing within this cabinet, dialogue has become possible and decision making has become possible. After security comes the economic and social aspect which has not yet been able to take off. However, it has started anew. This is very important for the future. I am optimistic, despite everything. I believe that the head of the state can

succeed in establishing and entrenching stability in the Lebanese territories, in establishing a state and in establishing a legitimate government truly concerned with the people's affairs.

Let us now speak of the party in the past 10 years. We, as a party, were founded to sacrifice and to struggle for a cause -- a national cause, the cause of the Lebanese person, the cause of liberty and the cause of values. The struggle did not start 10 years ago but rather 48 years ago. God willing, we will celebrate the 50th anniversary with Pierre al-Jumayyil in 2 years. This is one of our wishes for the party chairman. So we are people with a cause. Our struggle will not depend on a loss or on a victory. Our struggle has been a political, popular, unionist and national struggle at all levels. As all know, our struggle has been throughout the years a struggle for what we believe in. The Phalange history is well known and it has been completely tied to Lebanon's history since the Phalange came into existence. Thus, the difficult year through which we have gone cannot change anything in our faith, in our spirit and in our strength of struggle. On the contrary, we get tough in the face of difficulties. If there is a difficulty, we are prepared to confront all difficulties with utter firmness and, at the same time, with utter love and with an utter awareness of our national and humanitarian responsibility toward the Lebanese people. Confining the issue of the Phalanges' struggle or their success or failure to last year is an unsound projection of the issue. We still believe that the issue has not ended yet and that the cause is still present and we will continue the struggle for this cause. From 1975 until now, we have also struggled with the force of arms because we have been compelled to defend ourselves. But the struggle has had its various aspects. Currently, we are in the phase of a national and political struggle. God willing, we will not need to wage and will not be dragged into waging a military struggle. It is certain that we have tried to avoid such a military struggle. But we are also prepared to engage in this struggle if the other faction believes that it has triumphed. We all know who has triumphed. It is certain that the Lebanese are not the ones who have triumphed and that it is not a Lebanese faction that has triumphed. Just as we thought wrongly in the past that we had triumphed, others are now thinking that they have triumphed. Meanwhile, the regional and the international forces are the ones that have triumphed. Thus, we, the Phalanges Party, are capable of surviving as we have survived for 48 years. The party will survive throughout Lebanon's history, God willing. We will continue the struggle and we do not consider the loss that has occurred, if it is a loss, a fundamental loss to our cause or to our existence as a party or a loss that can affect the strength of our partisan struggle. We have lost a battle, and there is no doubt that we have lost a battle. Christianity has not fallen. If we have lost a battle, we have not lost the cause. Our struggle will march forward on its path and our political and national action will march forward on its path. In any case, we did experience previous losses which have not influenced nor changed our resolution, concern and enthusiasm for the cause. There is no doubt that some equations and some alliances have changed. But it is inevitable that after a descent there must be a climb and that everything can be recouped, not necessarily by force of arms but with a national and political course. In any case, this is not considered the end of the Christians, of the Phalanges Party or of the legitimate government. Under every administration,

cabinets come and go. This, certainly, is not the important thing. On the contrary, if every Lebanese faction knows its national interest, then Lebanon will be reunited. There is no doubt that the mountain will play a fundamental role in reuniting Lebanon. This is why the consequences of the mountain battle will be tackled first and why they are among the priorities with which Lebanon as a whole must be tackled.

[Question] There is the story of the evacuees from the mountain and the story of the mountain committee. There is also the position declared by the Progressive Socialist Party, and by Walid Junblatt in particular in his capacity as the victor in the mountain, namely the position that he will first return the "nationalist" Christians, then ex-President Sham'un's Christians and then the Phalangist Christians. This means that there are priorities and there is categorization. What is the Phalanges Party's stance vis-a-vis Walid Junblatt's position?

[Answer] First, I regret Walid Junblatt's projection. It is a projection that is tantamount to political needling and does not rise to the level required for dealing with national affairs. The principle of discussing this issue is rejected. In 1975, they tried to break down the Christians into categories and the endeavor reached catastrophic dimensions. We all remember the "record" of isolating the Phalanges and so forth. All this was rejected. Among the Christians killed in the mountain, many considered themselves socialists or Junblattists. But they were killed before the Phalanges. We know many of them. Many of the villages which witnessed massacres and in which numerous people were killed had been considered safe villages because they were friendly to the Junblattists. But their loyalty to Junblatt did not save them from the massacres.

Truce or Peace

[Question] Insofar as the security situation is concerned, the people are fearful nowadays. Some say that we are going through a truce. Are we approaching a new military step or are we in a phase of a real truce leading to peace?

[Answer] They have been at a loss as to what means to use in order to foil the mountain security plan. One time they want to discuss issues that have nothing to do with the mountain, such as the issue of retired teachers, and another time they want to discuss other issues. You have just reminded me of the security setbacks which used to occur before the mountain war. Do you know who shot the artillery fire which hit B'abda, al-Hazimiyah and other places? It is a well-known faction which has relations with the two regional sides which influence the Lebanese situation. We are aware of Syria's credibility at present. It does not suit Syria to have setbacks occur and nobody wants to utilize this situation to foil the plan in its entirety. The security plan was started in Beirut to succeed, and it will succeed. It will continue its march to the mountain so that there may emerge nationalist projects in every sense of the word. The mountain will be united because with the unification of the mountain, Lebanon will be united.

I do not like to use the word truce because I hope that this thing will be more than a truce. Regionally, I do not believe that the circumstances are opportune or that the climate is prepared for major setbacks. On the contrary, Israel is preoccupied with its internal conditions and Syria has, as I have already said, an interest in showing that its policy in Lebanon is successful. The people -- Christians, Shi'ites, Muslims and Druze, wherever they are -- need more than a respite. They need stability, considering their psychological conditions first and their economic and social conditions second. All the factions are unanimous that the security plan should be translated on the ground not into a truce but into real and long-lasting peace.

Relations with Others

[Question] According to your words, there are alliances and equations that have changed. How is your relationship with the Sunna sect, with Amal, with the Junblattists and with the Christians in the north?

[Answer] Frankly, it is premature to discuss our relations with each sectarian faction. To start with, we support the principle of dialogue and the principle of coexistence. These are two fundamental points. At the same time, we have a cause, which is the cause of the Christian presence in Lebanon. It is the cause of the Christians' political, cultural and educational presence and of the liberties and of the guarantees of the liberties within the viewpoint of the multiplicity of Lebanese society and of the multiple system. Our principled position is to be friends with all and to be open to all. However, this is not at all a position of weakness. On the contrary, we are open to all the parties concerned and we in the Phalanges are always prepared for dialogue with all the parties concerned. This is nothing new because we have a cause in which we believe and which we defend with logic. If we carry arms, then it is only to defend ourselves. On the basis of these principles, we are always prepared for dialogue, discussion and give-and-take with all -- with the Sunna, with the Shi'ites and with the Druze -- within certain limits. As I have said, let no one think that this is a position of weakness and let no one think that he can impose on us in any way or shape our will or our view of affairs or of the homeland. There are basic red lines from which we cannot retreat and which we will defend. If others want to try to impose on us their opinions directly, indirectly or gradually -- and this is a plan that may be followed and we see some of them following it -- then we are prepared to confront them by all means. We have proven this for the past 10 years, rather for the past 43 years, and we are prepared to prove it every minute and every hour. This does not mean that we are against dialogue. We are for genuine, frank, sincere and conscientious dialogue emanating from our belief in coexistence. We do not accept that anyone impose his will on us on the basis of a victory which he believes he has scored. This must be made clear. We are prepared, and so are the Christians, for all sacrifices. We have fought for the liberties of the Christians and the minorities as a whole and for the liberties of the Lebanese citizen as an individual in a society and in a certain Middle Eastern world. We have sacrificed 5,000-6,000 martyrs for the cause. We are prepared to make more sacrifices. We are still present in our institutions to defend the situation. This does not mean a declaration of war. It is only meant to cross

the t's and dot the i's so that nobody may interpret our position on coexistence and dialogue as a weakness. Our position is a conscientious position and a principled position of supporting the legitimate Lebanese government in finding the right solutions for the Lebanese issue.

If They Impose War

[Question] If war is imposed anew to dictate any solution, is the Phalanges Party prepared for military confrontation?

[Answer] We hope that no war will be imposed on us and hope that the State of Lebanon, as a legitimate government and army, will defend the rights of the Lebanese. We hope that if someone wants to obtain his right, he will do so through the cabinet and, in the future, through the constituent assembly. But if someone wants to impose a certain projection or tendency or to take things away gradually, then we will ask the legitimate government to defend the rights of the Lebanese and the Lebanese system. As usual, if the situation merits it and if the homeland demands it, we are prepared for sacrifices. We in the Phalanges Party have sacrificed many martyrs, led by Bashir al-Jumayyil and William Hawi. We are prepared for such sacrifices at all times. However, we prefer to see the legitimate government shoulder its responsibility.

Syria and Israel

[Question] While speaking of sacrifices, how do you explain the Phalanges Party's relations with Syria?

[Answer] I can give you a principled position: we are for the presence of good relations with Syria. Syria has been Lebanon's neighbor for a long time, is still Lebanon's neighbor and will continue to be Lebanon's neighbor. It is natural for Syria and Lebanon, as neighbors, to have good relations founded on mutual respect and mutual dignity. Syria and Lebanon have joint interests. I believe that it is in the definite interest of each country, and I am now speaking as a partisan and not as a Lebanese citizen, to have these good relations between the two countries. There is a political, national, economic and security interest in having strong relations. This is what we are working for. The circumstances we have experienced have demonstrated the need for good relations between Syria and Lebanon to serve the interests of all. We hope that this will continue. Currently, we are in a position of openness to any Arab direction generally and any Syrian direction especially.

[Question] How do you interpret the relationship with Israel?

[Answer] Let us stay with the Arabs.

[Question] Regarding the issue of alliances and equations, the Phalanges Party projected the federal formula in Lausanne as a formula for the Lebanese solution. Now, the party is returning to the 1943 charter. How do you reconcile the projection of federalism in Lausanne with the current projection of the 1943 charter?

[Answer] What is important is the principle. We are now looking for the best formula to insure the coexistence of the Lebanese. There are other fundamental points which we must not forget:

First, the 1943 charter is one of coexistence. It has been said that it is a federal charter among the sects, including fundamental guarantees for the Christians who have needed these guarantees since 1943 and who still need them after 10 years of war. Pierre al-Jumayyil says that it is not important to tell a man not to be afraid. What is important is that he not be afraid. The Christian is still apprehensive over his future and liberties, seeing the demands of the others and especially seeing the background of the demands of the others.

The basic principles at present are the principles of the multiplicity of the Lebanese society. Any political system in Lebanon must crystallize this multiplicity because we believe that there is sectarian, cultural, social and educational multiplicity in Lebanon. The Lebanese system must crystallize this multiplicity, must be democratic and must guarantee the liberties of all the Lebanese, both as individuals and as sects. Lebanon is the Lebanon of liberties and cannot be otherwise. It can only be the Lebanon of liberties.

We are against the dictatorship of any faction or any sect because we are for democracy, regardless of what the numbers are. This is a basic principle from which emanate guarantees that must exist in order that the Lebanese Christian may be reassured over his future, considering that he lives in the midst of an Arab and Islamic world where all the heads of state are Muslim and where the religion of every state is Islam.

What formula can secure these guarantees? The federal formula projected in Lausanne can secure these guarantees within certain conditions. This is the case of the 1943 charter within the framework of the Lebanese constitution which guarantees liberties, even the liberties concerning education, because there are in the Lebanese constitution numerous points of which the people are unaware. The 1943 charter guarantees these things. Because of all of this, Pierre al-Jumayyil refers to and raises the issue of the 1943 charter in his statements every now and then even though the guarantees given the Christians in 1943 have not been able to prevent what happened in 1975 and even what happened in 1976, namely the defeat of the Christians and the possibility of their military failure, of their departure from Lebanon and of Palestinian domination of Lebanon.

So we are prepared for dialogue. But there are fundamental points within the issues we have mentioned which we cannot give up because they are the basis of our existence, the future of our children and our view of the world as a whole. They are the more important guarantees. So far, nobody has projected the abolition of political sectarianism, the establishment of a unified secular system for all the Lebanese, the establishment of civil marriage and separation of the state and the religious authorities. Religion regulates all aspects of religious affairs and does not deal with the secular aspect. Nobody has raised this issue.

We see the issue of abolishing political sectarianism and of entrenching numerical democracy as coming from leaders who consider things mistakenly, given that the population numbers are now in their favor, thus entitling them to control the government by numbers. This does not reassure the Christians and we cannot accept this direction of the dictatorship of numbers at present or in the future because the Lebanese citizen is not stupid and can see the background behind these demands, which we consider totally sectarian. The seemingly non-sectarian demands are sectarian in the fullest sense of the word. It is not in this way that the Lebanese issue can be settled. So we must accept the Lebanese reality and accept the distinguishing characteristics of every Lebanese faction, especially since every faction has its distinguishing characteristics. We must accept and acknowledge this presence, must sit with it around the table and must discuss in the best possible manner the means of coexistence, while resting sure that this coexistence is not a coexistence of waiting to pounce, with everybody carrying his gun or holding his knife. This is the best way, and there is no other way.

Now that we have said that the 1943 charter is not incompatible with a certain degree of decentralism, a new geographic division of Lebanon may occur as a result of numerous changes that have taken place, with a decentralism that is not incompatible with the 1943 charter and provided that it does not affect the presence of the central government. Therefore, decentralism must be within certain limits. Decentralism has become necessary in Lebanon and it can be one of the guarantees. All this is in the picture and we are prepared to discuss it, provided that no projections with a clear background are presented to us -- projections through which everyone considers himself the ruler of Lebanon by means of the sword. There are fundamental issues we cannot abandon because they are considered the red line and the minimum guarantees.

Phalangist Areas

[Question] How do you view the security situation in the area controlled by the Phalanges Party and the Lebanese Forces?

[Answer] It is a wartime society and we live in a wartime society -- a society that is suffering economically and socially. I will not say that there is a crisis in the complete sense of the word but there are undeniable social problems. At the present time, there is a wartime society, a society in which there are fighters and people who were fighters. It is not easy for any specific institution, especially if it is illegal, to insure self-security. The dearest thing to our hearts is to see the legitimate government resume control of the security issues, stop the violations and attend to the safety of the citizens and of their property. This is our wish. I begin the answer by expressing the wish so that the answer may not be misinterpreted.

But despite everything, we can say that the internal security situation in our areas is attended to day and night and that the agencies concerned carry out their duties in the best manner. However, this does not preclude the occurrence of incidents and I do not deny that incidents take place. It is inevitable that ordinary, even less than ordinary, incidents occur from time to time in a society such as the society in which we are now living. But it is certain

that the incidents that occur are a lot less important than the incidents that used to occur before the war. For 2 years, security has been more stable. A lot can now be said about the smallest incident. I would like to remind you that when New York experienced a power outage, the unimaginable was committed. Pierre al-Jumayyil mentions this event frequently. However, we can say and we believe that the security agencies watching the security situation encounter numerous violations and excesses and deal with them.

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PESSIMISM SEEN OVER PROSPECTS OF SECURITY AGREEMENT

Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic No 393, 1 Sep 84 pp 26-27

[Article by Ghassan Bayram: "Season of Due Payments Has Started Early"]

[Text] Beirut -- The weekly postponement of cabinet meetings has become the best means to avoid torpedoing the Lebanese national unity cabinet from within. Some politicians believe that resorting to this method is perhaps due to the fact that the time to permit the collapse or fall of this cabinet has not yet come, whereas others believe that the collapse of this cabinet will, by necessity, be followed by a security collapse resulting in renewed large-scale fighting and in a return to the situation prevalent before the formation of this cabinet. This also is an impermissible development in this particular period. Others believe in both possibilities. However, this changes nothing in the actual situation, namely that the survival or departure of this cabinet is not in the hands of those present in it or of those who formed it. This is perhaps one of the manifestations of the continued dependence on external factors and considerations that continue to govern the game of the struggle going on in Lebanon as a part or a reflection of the conflict experienced by the area. The day Prime Minister Rashid Karami formed the cabinet 4 months ago, during which time it was agreed to call the national unity cabinet, it was said that this cabinet was the last chance, meaning that this was the last chance available to the Lebanese to tackle their affairs and to reach an internal solution that could put an end to their infighting and that they would have to exploit this chance before the foreign payments came due and caused them to lose the chances for a solution, perhaps forever.

Now that 4 months have passed, many Lebanese and foreigners wonder why all these months have been lost without reaching serious practical solutions to defuse finally the explosive Lebanese situation. This question has begun to generate other questions such as: has the last-chance cabinet not risen to the level of its historic responsibility, and has it failed, along with the regime, to comprehend the dangers of its failure to the future of the Lebanese situation? Or do the same foreign forces stand as an obstacle preventing this cabinet from achieving what it had come to achieve? All this has caused time to be lost in differences and conflicts while the situation continues to be nearly unchanged and liable to explode and flare up at any moment and for any reason, no matter how insignificant. Regardless of whether the causes of the failure are intrinsic incompetence and incapacity or the elements of external pressure that do

not wish to see Lebanon become independent and rid itself of this fatal tribulation, there is another fact, namely that this is the last chance which nobody wants to say has failed. However, there is a semi-consensus that this chance has been eroded to such a degree that the possibilities of major security explosions have begun to loom in the horizon. All the indications which emerged last week were nothing but serious warnings of all this.

The first indication was the faltering of the endeavors seeking to implement the mountain security plan and, consequently, the deterioration of the relations between President Amin al-Jumayyil's regime and Minister Walid Junblatt, the Progressive Socialist Party chairman, who has resumed his attacks against the president of the republic and the political faction supporting him, making against the president serious accusations that can blow up all the lines of communication or cooperation.

The second indication emerged during the sudden deterioration which ignited fighting on the contact lines in the capital, thus planting terror and fear in the hearts of the citizens and spreading the belief that the beginning of the truce's end has started and that the situation was heading back to fighting. Were it not for the quick intervention of some leads and circles to contain and stop the clashes, the entire situation would have erupted and would have become worse than it had been in the past.

Before the occurrence of this limited eruption on Sunday evening, we had an interview with ex-Prime Minister Sa'ib Salam which was not yet ready for publication. In the interview, Salam expressed numerous apprehensions as a result of the loss of this chance and said that what is more dangerous than its erosion is that all have lost the way to the real and fundamental solutions and have continued to waste their time with internal and subsidiary conflicts, differences and bargaining over the exchange of political and private benefits and interests. But what keeps ex-Prime Minister Salam, ex-Prime Minister Taqi-al-Din al-Sulh and other political leaders somewhat optimistic and prevents them from becoming pessimistic quickly is their awareness of Syria's determination to intervene at the right time to surmount all the obstacles and to overcome all the hinderances in order to begin the march toward a political and security solution and to achieve real peace. The information which ex-Prime Minister Taqi-al-Din al-Sulh says he is confident of is that Damascus is still capable of imposing this solution by various means, and even at the last moment. This information also confirms that the Syrian capital is determined to achieve this and that it acts on the basis that releasing the solutions necessary for the Lebanese crisis is its only option, not just out of concern for Lebanon's unity and independence, which are essential, but also out of its firmness in defending Syria's and the Arab area's security in the face of the new Israeli onslaught.

Deputy Husayn al-Husayni holds a similar belief which has been reinforced after a lengthy meeting he had last week with President Amin al-Jumayyil when they reviewed the various issues of interest, beginning with the continued lack of security in Beirut, with the causes still obstructing the approval and implementation of the mountain security plan and with the situation in the south and with what Israel is doing and ending, of course, with the developments

that have begun to emerge in the horizon of the battle for the speakership of the Chamber of Deputies. Deputy al-Husayni is the candidate competing most seriously with current speaker Kamil al-As'ad for the speakership of the coming session, which begins next October.

In his public and private statements, the president of the republic has underlined the importance of the Syrian role in settling numerous issues, saying that he ultimately expects the pressure of Syrian intervention to disperse the clouds that have begun to accumulate anew in the prevalent climate. The president also says that Syrian officials have renewed their reproach at the slow pace at which the efforts to reach a solution are proceeding and have expressed their dissatisfaction with the faltering of this procession. President al-Jumayyil asserts that he continues to cooperate with President Hafiz al-Asad to surmount all the difficulties and that he does not doubt the Syrian president's sincere desire to help achieve salvation, despite the confused picture and the state of uncertainty dominating the situation at present.

Eyes are now turned toward a likely meeting between Presidents al-Asad and al-Jumayyil. It has been said that Maj Gen Muhammad al-Khuli, the Syrian president's personal envoy, is exerting efforts in Beirut to prepare for this meeting. It is feared that the new developments in the area have begun to monopolize the total attention of the Syrian president, who may keep his contacts at the envoy level.

In any case, the internal political and military situation dictates decisive Syrian intervention to restore normality to the situation as soon as possible, especially before the differences over the principles and details of the mountain security plan become more complex and before they exert their negative impact on the other issues raised and reopen the door completely to greater Israeli involvement in the Lebanese game.

For days, talk in political and press circles has focused on Israel's entry on the line, i.e., Israel's entry to obstruct the implementation of any security plan in the mountain. Ex-Prime Minister Taqi-al-Din al-Sulh often ridicules such statements, asking: when has Israel not been on the line and when has it completely departed from the Lebanese game and from exploiting its contradictions in order that it may be said that it has re-entered the game? Ex-Prime Minister al-Sulh adds that Israel was involved from the start in the game of detonation and that its involvement assumed broader and deeper dimensions after the invasion. He further adds that even though Israel has been preoccupied with its elections, it has continued to be present either through its occupation of the south, Western al-Biqa' and Rashayya or through some local political forces, both known and unknown. Through these statements, ex-Prime Minister al-Sulh has tried to approach, even if only partially, the essence of the causes that have created these complications and has charged the political and security climate with the elements of the explosion to the extent that has motivated Salim al-Huss, the minister of education and labor, to warn that the government situation is unhealthy and that the salvation process is exposed to a major setback.

In pondering the essence of the causes posing the threat of an explosion in the crisis, some observers refuse to confine these causes to the position of Walid Junblatt, the Druze leader and the chairman of the Progressive Socialist Party, on the implementation of the mountain security plan or to the regime's position vis-a-vis this issue. These observers say that the disagreement over the issue of the mountain security plan is a consequence and is not the only cause. This is because Minister Junblatt is not the only one who opposes the mountain security plan and ties its implementation to opening the political dossier. At the outset, there were specific calls to the other faction, whose military arm is represented by the Lebanese Forces, to make certain concessions. But the Lebanese Forces faction thought that the concessions demanded by Syria or by the others must be coupled with advanced knowledge of the broad lines or at least with a written political solution to find the extent of this political solution's commitment to the guarantees needed for the Christians. At one time, it was agreed that opening the dossier of the political solution in this delicate phase in which the game of external polarization is still present may lead to new labyrinths. This agreement made it possible to focus attention on the security solution so that if this solution is entrenched in Beirut and the mountain in particular and if it becomes strong enough to be reassuring, it would then be possible to open the political dossier. This inclination toward the security solution, though making modest strides in Beirut, has again clashed with the fundamental demand of both sides to the conflict, namely speeding up the opening of the political dossier before any side loses the military cards it possesses, keeping in mind that each faction's motives are different from the other's.

This tug of war in this sphere continued and reached its most sensitive phase when the mountain security plan was presented as a fait accompli and when the situation reached a serious turning point and required decisiveness. All the internal factions, whether Junblatt's faction or the Lebanese Forces faction, were faced with difficult options. It is not easy for such a situation to develop without the emergence first of Syrian pressure and second of international positions putting before the parties to the conflict the option of either accepting the Arab option led by Damascus, which means moving practically to the phase of firm security solutions and then of political solutions, or sinking anew in the maelstrom of conflicts that will lead either to the loss of the last chance of the national unity cabinet or to the final fall of the so-called last chance for reuniting Lebanon.

8494

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TRAVEL, AVIATION IN LEBANON FACE CRISIS

London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic No 1457, 5 Oct 84 p 57

/Article: "Travel and Aviation Sectors in Lebanon Face Reservation Problems; Computer to Stop Seat Trade!"

/Text/ It is natural for the Lebanese ordeal to germinate a number of crises engulfing the daily life of a country that survives on services.

Among these crises, considered by some as an inevitable consequence of a war that has been going on for 10 years, some obstacles that could react to influence the course of the plan to salvage the economy and the social structure come into view.

There is no doubt that the Middle East Airlines Company /MEA/ is one pillar of this economic structure that has always displayed the resiliency of the Lebanese talent and the tenacity of the Lebanese people.

This company, which began breathing again when the Beirut airport opened towards the end of last July, is still suffering the consequences of the state of upheaval and disarray and the difficulties of controlling individual transgressions and practices.

Last week, new light was shed on important points related to the national institutions suffering from this state of affairs when the luncheon that brought together owners and managers of airline companies, travel and tourist agencies, hotels, restaurants and nightclubs in Lebanon turned from an ordinary meeting to give concrete form to the return of communications to this large sector into a working encounter in which the suffering of its institutions and social and economic tributaries were put on the table of discussion and debate. This debate shed light on one of the most important obstacles impeding the revitalization of the traffic that links Lebanon with the world through its vital ports.

Shaykh Ramzi 'Alam-al-Din, director of the Skol Club in Beirut that includes the aforementioned tourist sectors, summed up the highlights of the problem when he opened the debate that included Mr Salim Salam,

board director of MEA and senior company official, by saying that the difficulties facing the tourist and aviation sectors in Lebanon range from minor everyday problems to problems of exploitation of this sector, on a daily basis as well.

'Alam-al-Din, in his presentation of the problem, said that people, the airline companies and the travel agencies are facing a state of paralysis with regard to the process of reservations on MEA flights.

He also said that the reservation process is being hampered by bad phone service which forces a travel agent to wait several hours before getting a telephone line to the reservation office to reserve or confirm seats on all the various flights. This paralyzes the normal reservation procedure and the procedure of prompt cancellation as well, and causes losses to the companies and difficulties for travel agencies. It also spreads chaos among passengers at the airport.

'Alam-al'Din said that MEA's management is well aware of the enormity of the problem and has statistical lists of empty seats on flights that had been fully booked.

Salim Salam moved to turn these observations into a topic of discussion in this same meeting, to include the director of reservations, Yahya Hakim, and his two deputies Khalid al-Musaffi and Wasim Abu Hamzah.

The basic fact reached by the conferees was to underscore the importance of a government initiative to remove the difficulties in communication which, due to the war, fail to meet the minimum standard for maintaining the necessary link between the traveler, the travel agent and the airline company.

In this "technical" framework, the ideal solution, in the opinion of the conferees, is the installation of a computer connecting the MEA reservations office with all the travel agencies on the IATA /International Air Transport Association/ membership list, and the implementation of an emergency program whereby MEA will cooperate with these agencies to defray the costs of this sophisticated system that can deal with the problem singlehandedly, especially in an extraordinary situation such as Lebanon's.

The computer project was presented to MEA for the first time 2 years ago for the same reasons that exist today. Preliminary studies indicate that it can be implemented through a government-MEA initiative and costs could be defrayed with the cooperation of the travel agencies or through the leasing of the computer to these agencies, thus covering the cost price within 2 years.

It was agreed to charge MEA with the task of preparing a technical and financial study of the project and to determine the government's ability to provide the necessary basis for the equipment.

Preliminary opinions that debated these solutions note that the implementation of such a project requires attention that goes beyond the search for financial sources and communication lines.

One problem, for example, is how to deal with travel agencies that do not belong to IATA and with individuals who trade in tickets and reservations, along the lines of the "suitcase" merchants who obtain tickets or reservations through various means and offer them at cut rate prices, thus creating in the tourist sector a class that exploits tourist capabilities without the duties and responsibilities of the authorized companies as defined by the aviation law.

There was a unanimous agreement that the Ministry of Tourism must act to put a stop to such disarray and to remove all obstacles impeding the plan to develop the reservation process and to overstep the primitive way employed in Lebanon until now.

Other aspects of the reservation problems are under official study in order to identify and uproot them with a view to alleviating people's suffering.

Some of these aspects have to do with the emergency of a class of profiteers who take advantage of the people's urgent need to travel. This class relies on special friendships and contacts to trade in seats and reservations in accordance with a system of categorization that charges a rate for every seat reserved for foreign travel. This system, for instance, charges 250 Lebanese pounds for a reserved seat to Europe and 500 pounds for one to the Gulf. This rate multiplies according to the passenger's "weight," his financial means and his need for a seat on a flight he was told was fully booked.

One travel and airline advisor urges not to exaggerate the problems of aviation and tourism in Lebanon, saying that the problem of reservations and no-shows is a universal one considered to be a fact of life in this industry. It usually ranges between 10 and 20 percent of the total number of passengers, but the war situation in Lebanon has inflated this rate, prompting a need to deal with it in modern ways that have eluded Lebanon because of the war that started 10 years ago.

Shaykh 'Alam-al-Din said MEA has promised to conclude the study and expressed every readiness to cooperate with the travel agencies and the government to put an end to the enduring chaos in seat reservations, especially since the company is suffering moral and material consequences as a result.

'Alam-al'Din added that the travel and tourist agencies will continue their serious efforts in this regard and will help MEA bring this case before competent state authorities so that they may be able to conduct their business officially and to provide the necessary services for their clients.

So, will this important issue in the life of every Lebanese be solved by the modern technology employed in most countries of the world, or will the solution be put off for 2 or more years?

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PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

AL-HUT EXPRESSES DEMANDS CONCERNING PALESTINIAN CIVILIANS IN LEBANON

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 75, 15 Sep 84 pp 27-28

[Interview with Palestinian leader Shafiq al-Hut by Rashid Khashshanah: "Shafiq al-Hut Speaks to AL-TADAMUN on Reality and Future of Lebanese-Palestinian Relations; Closing Dossier of Lebanese Problems Precedes Opening of Palestinian Dossier"; in Tunis, date not specified]

[Text] Tunis -- Shafiq al-Hut is one of the Palestinians who emigrated to Lebanon in 1948 and settled there. His rich experience and his long dealings with Lebanese affairs qualified him to take charge of managing the PLO Office in Beirut until he was deported from Lebanon last summer when the office was closed.

Shafiq al-Hut is one of the few who know the secrets of Lebanese policy and who is well aware of the substance of Palestinian-Lebanese relations. AL-TADAMUN interviewed him to find out how the PLO's relations with the Lebanese government have developed since he was deported from Beirut, how warmth has begun to return to these relations and what effect this has on the Cairo agreement and on the Palestinian Research Center. The following is the text of the interview:

[Question] Whenever an "upheaval" occurs with Israel, Palestinian-Lebanese relations again become the top interest of the Lebanese government. How do you expect these relations to develop in the next few months?

[Answer] Before answering this question, we must remind ourselves that the dossier of Palestinian-Lebanese relations date back to more than 10 years ago. The start of official relations was perhaps launched with the so-called Cairo agreement. This was in 1969 and we are now in 1984. This 15-year period abounds with events in the Lebanese arena and in the Middle East arena generally. They also abound, and I say this with regret, with negative relations, both at the popular level and at the official level.

In the wake of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, it is my conviction that extremely significant and serious developments have cropped up in the Arab arena generally and in the Palestinian arena in particular, the most significant being the departure of the Palestinian armed forces from Lebanon, the only arena from which the Palestinian armed struggle could launch its activity. We all know what has developed in the PLO since the departure from

Lebanon and from Tripoli. New developments have occurred in Palestinian-Lebanese relations. Therefore, when speaking about these relations, we should not neglect Lebanese-Israeli relations and inter-Lebanese relations. Until 5 March 1984, the official option in Lebanon was one of capitulation to the consequences of the Zionist occupation. We all know the contents of the 17 May accord which clearly exposed Israeli ambitions in Lebanon and the extent of the domination which Israel wanted to exercise in the Lebanese arena -- domination rejected by the Lebanese people and by the Arab liberation forces, including the PLO, of course. Among other things, the 17 May accord contained a provision that did not permit even the Lebanese himself to engage in any activity Israel considers hostile to it. I will cite here an example so that we may understand what this "provision" means. The example was included in a special pamphlet by Dr George Dib, a Lebanese professor of politics, who said: "If, for example, King Fahd delivered a speech dealing with the Palestinian people's rights and then distributed this speech to his country's embassies, including his embassy in Beirut, and if the press attache publishes this speech in the Lebanese papers, Israel may demand the closing of the Saudi Embassy in Beirut." This is an example of what the 17 May accord contained. If this is the situation insofar as Lebanon and the Arab countries are concerned, both of whom may be shackled for merely declaring their support for the Palestinian people's rights -- which Israel considers hostile to it -- then what can be said about the PLO, which Israel considers its number-one enemy? Thus, from 1982 until the abolition of the 17 May accord, the mere thought of opening the Palestinian-Lebanese dossier was completely out of the question.

Now that the accord has been abolished both officially and on paper, it is expected that it will be abolished on the ground. We have seen some of the early signs of this abolition on the ground since the closing of the Israeli Liaison Office in Dubayyah, which was in fact a complete embassy. This is undoubtedly a positive step on the part of the current national unity cabinet headed by Prime Minister Rashid Karami. However, the Israeli occupation of South Lebanon continues and this occupation is awaiting security arrangements which are still being prepared and studied by the Lebanese government. What we must point out in this respect is the emergence of the Lebanese national resistance which will limit the duration of this occupation. It will then become clearer to us how far the Lebanese regime is committed to the new Arab option which has become clear since the Lausanne conference and the formation of the national union cabinet.

We are awaiting now the settlement of some inter-Lebanese problems and the formulation of the so-called "security arrangements" between the Lebanese government and Israel for the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from Lebanon. These arrangements will indubitably include a provision concerning the Palestinian presence in Lebanon. Of course, there is no place for discussing the armed presence. However, there is the large Palestinian civilian presence in the Lebanese arena and I believe that the credibility of the Lebanese regime's choice of the Arab option -- to be part of the Arab homeland -- will become clear in the near future. Consequently, Lebanon will shoulder what this homeland is shouldering and will benefit from what is beneficial to this homeland in its entirety.

The Palestinian provision will then deal with the military forces present in Lebanon and I believe that the decision will be clear. So as not to deceive ourselves, there will be no legitimate armed Palestinian presence in Lebanon.

As for the civilian presence, I will say the following about it:

1. We want a guarantee for the safety and security of the Palestinian citizen living in Lebanon. The Palestinians in Lebanon are living in a state of constant, and justifiable, fear in the wake of what happened to them in Sabra and Shatila and of the later minor massacres in 'Ayn al-Hulwah and other places. Protecting these civilians must, in the absence of Palestinian forces, be the responsibility of the Lebanese government.
2. The Palestinian living in Lebanon legally, i.e., the Palestinian with a document certifying that he has taken refuge in Lebanon since 1948, must have civil rights that permit him to live freely and honorably. It may not be at all objective on my part to demand that the Palestinian in Lebanon be given the same rights as the Lebanese. We appreciate the fact that the Lebanese has priority in his homeland, as the Syrian and the Egyptian in theirs. But the Palestinian must be given the second best right because if this citizen, while waiting for the big happy ending and for repatriation, cannot find a source of livelihood, then it means that we are plotting against the future of these people in one form or another and that we are raising unconstructive generations that are useful for neither the Palestinian people nor the Arab nation.
3. The travel, movement and residence of Palestinian civilians in Lebanon and in the other Arab countries must be facilitated. To be fair, the Palestinian suffers from this problem in more than one place. Consequently, it is time that the Palestinian be treated as an Arab citizen at the airports of the Arab countries. I am ashamed to find in some Arab airports three signs: one with the sign "Arabs," another with the sign "foreigners" and a third with the sign "Palestinians." If it is logical for us to struggle now for our national identity, it is unreasonable that we be compelled to struggle for our pan-Arab identity. If Israel wants to deprive us of our Palestinian identity, then it is impermissible to make the Palestinian feel that he does not at least belong to his Arab nation.

These matters flow not only into the course of the interest of the Palestinians living in Lebanon but also into the course of the interest of Lebanon itself because as long as this Palestinian presence is there, then it must be organized. I believe that it is easier for the Lebanese government to organize these relations through the PLO and its representative, the PLO Office in Lebanon, than to deal with 300,000 Palestinians individually. There will then be regulations that govern these relations with specific provisions acting as the reference and the umpire in any dispute developing between any Palestinian and the Lebanese authorities. I believe that some of our brothers in the Lebanese arena have come to feel that it is necessary to deal with the Palestinian as an existing reality, even though a temporary reality, and that the more civil facilities the government offers, the more they reduce the possibility of the occurrence of troubles and unrest.

There remains an important issue, namely the relationship of Lebanon as an Arab country with the PLO as a member of the Arab family. I believe that Lebanon can find numerous examples of the relations between the PLO and the Arab countries within the framework of the Arab League and that it can see the model it wishes to choose in expanding these relations. I say this because we have almost forgotten that the PLO and the Palestinian revolution came into existence to regain the Palestinian soil and Palestinian rights and because we have come to talk about painful and regrettable subsidiary wars, some of which have taken place in Lebanon, as if Lebanon were the target of the Palestinians and even though the reality belies such words. The PLO is struggling to regain Jerusalem, the West Bank, the occupied territories and the Palestinian national identity. Therefore, we cannot deny the Palestinian wherever he may be, especially if he is in an Arab country, his right to struggle in this direction. These words do not, of course, mean armed struggle necessarily. However, it is the right of the Palestinian people in Lebanon to give the PLO the capabilities and efforts it needs to bolster the entire march of the Palestinian people in their struggle to regain their national rights.

I also believe that this is in Lebanon's interest, if Lebanon does not want the Palestinian to become an everlasting citizen on its soil. If Lebanon wants the Palestinian to be a temporary resident, then it must support his struggle to regain Palestine where his residence will be final and everlasting.

[Question] You have just said that some brothers in the Lebanese arena have begun to feel the importance of dealing with the PLO. Does this evaluation have any connection with the reports circulated recently about a meeting that was to be held between a Palestinian and a Lebanese delegation on the sidelines of the meeting of the Arab ministers of foreign affairs which has been postponed? Is it likely that official Palestinian-Lebanese meetings will take place shortly?

[Answer] To be frank, I believe that some of the brothers are in a hurry to open the Palestinian dossier. I understand the motives behind such a rush. I should perhaps belong to this team before any other man because I live in Lebanon and I deal with mountains of problems from which the Palestinian suffers. But if we want to be realistic, i.e., if we want to deal with what is happening on the ground and not in the mind and in the imagination, then we must say that Lebanon is still suffering from Lebanese problems. We must remember that not more than a few weeks have passed since the cease fire, that Beirut has been destroyed and that the country is divided. We must realize that we are one part of a total picture in the Lebanese arena at present. Therefore, because we in the PLO support Lebanon's struggle to regain its freedom, unity and life, we must take these priorities into consideration. From now until the Palestinian dossier is opened so that its basis may be established, there is an opportunity for communications to alleviate the intensity of the current problems facing the Palestinian residents. I believe that the problems are being somewhat loosened now. The problems have not been solved but they have been eased. This in itself is a positive sign on the part of the Lebanese government. I hope that the positive features in the Lebanese official position will grow until the time comes when we cannot but open relations at an official level. Therefore, when I came to Tunisia, preparations were under way to convene a meeting of the Arab ministers of

foreign affairs and I had expected the meeting to provide an occasion for a side meeting between the PLO and the Lebanese delegation. But the ministers' meeting has been postponed, as you have mentioned, and we will continue our side contacts while waiting for an official meeting to take place so that matters may be discussed at the level of ministers of foreign affairs in order that the ministers may determine collectively when would be the proper time for an official bilateral discussion between the PLO and the Lebanese government.

[Question] What is the fate of the PLO Office in the current phase?

[Answer] Its fate is part of the discussion and agenda.

[Question] One of the main problems in Lebanese-Palestinian relations is the presence of Palestinian forces in al-Biqa' and the north. Do you believe that the solution to this problem lies in introducing modifications to the Cairo agreement?

[Answer] There is talk at present about abolishing the Cairo agreement. But we should not forget that there are other Arab sides concerned with this agreement.

Naturally, the agreement is no longer valid on the ground. We do not wish to deceive ourselves, but official abolition by the Lebanese government has not occurred. Such abolition might be one of the most important Israeli conditions for withdrawal from Lebanon. Rather, I am confident that this abolition heads the list of these conditions.

It may be our duty as Palestinians to reconsider the issue within the framework of our support for the Lebanese march to liberate Lebanese soil and to regain the unity of the Lebanese people. But all know that when these issues are discussed, other issues will be raised. It will then be the PLO's right to ask: what about our people in Lebanon? What about the camps? What about the PLO Office? I believe that it is possible to reach a multifaceted solution encompassing several areas that are subject to give and take.

[Question] Does the endeavor to transfer the Palestinian Research Center to Cairo mean that there is no hope of its return to Beirut?

[Answer] I am most deeply saddened by the fate of the Research Center and by its absence from Beirut. I am saddened not from the Palestinian angle but from the Lebanese angle because Lebanon in particular, as an Arab state, was -- and I hope it will regain its status -- a center of culture, learning and publishing. Lebanon can perhaps offer in this sphere more than any other Arab country. Lebanon's circumstances, the size of its population and its resources do not permit it to become a military state with the strength of Syria or even of Jordan because of its nature and because its role is a cultural, information and civilizational role.

For the sake of the truth, I must say that it was not the Lebanese government which ordered the closing of the Research Center. The center was pursued, attacked and blown up and many of its personnel were killed during the period of the Israeli control of Beirut because the Israelis know that a center such

as the Research Center is a lot more important than one or two military bases. Because the center tackles a problem from a scientific, academic, cultural and civilizational starting point, it perhaps poses a greater threat to Israeli policy and the Israeli entity than an army.

Naturally, it was impossible for the center to remain idle until the situation in the Lebanese arena and in Beirut cleared up. Thus, the officials in charge of the center started looking for a place from which they could resume the center's activity. They encountered problems in Cyprus. It is my belief that it is a disgrace to the Arab nation that we cannot find an Arab capital capable of accommodating a beneficial cultural center that has been an important reference source for students throughout 15 years. So the choice then fell on Cairo. But no final agreements have been concluded in this regard so far. I know that there has been initial approval by the Egyptian government. There is nothing wrong with Cairo being the headquarters of the Research Center because Cairo is also a capital with culture, civilization and capabilities and because it is better to have a Palestinian center than to have an Israeli center in Cairo. If a final agreement is reached in this regard, it would be an important step.

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PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

PLF MILITARY COMMANDER DISCUSSES CONVOCAATION OF NATIONAL COUNCIL

Beirut AL-NAHAR AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI in Arabic No 383, 3-9 Sep 84 pp 34-35

[Interview with Abu al-'Abbas, military commander of Palestine Liberation Front, by 'Abd-al-Hadi Mahfuz: "Convocation of Palestinian National Council Is Important Link in Settling Syrian-Palestinian Affairs"; date and place not specified]

[Text] With the approaching date of the convocation of the PNC, [Palestinian National Council], there has been diplomatic activity by the Arab East and the Arab Maghreb to settle the differences between the PLO and Damascus. The mediators pause before a certain phenomenon, namely that Arab solidarity is more urgent and more needed this time, especially since the Israeli elections have provided an indication of Israeli radicalism rising to such a degree that makes any wager on "some sort of settlement" impossible.

When one meets with Palestinian leaders, one feels that settlement of the Palestinian-Syrian conflict is their primary concern. This is why these leaders view the Algerian role with great satisfaction and why you find more than one Palestinian official reiterating to you the words of the late Algerian President Boumediene, namely "Algeria is with Palestine, right or wrong," and telling you that the position of Chadli Bendjedid, the current Algerian president, is one of commitment to what the PLO decides on the Palestinian issue.

Palestinian satisfaction has been evident in the wake of the quick trip made in the middle of last month (August) to Algeria by Abu 'Ammar and Abu Iyad, who met with President Chadli Bendjedid. At this meeting, the Algerian president welcomed the convocation of the PNC in Algiers at the end of this month and created for the PLO chairman a climate for a Syrian-Palestinian reconciliation, since Damascus has no objection to the PNC's convocation nor to the "Palestinian options."

Those who have met with the PLO chairman since the Algiers trip have felt his optimism. Rather, they have felt obvious flexibility in his words about Damascus. As soon as he returned from the Algerian capital, he received a telephone call from King Fahd ibn 'Abd-al-'Aziz, the Saudi monarch. Abu 'Ammar flew to Riyadh on 18 August 1984 and returned 2 days later to convene a meeting of the PLO Executive Committee. It was noticed that Algeria and Saudi Arabia agreed in principle on Syrian-Palestinian reconciliation. This

is extremely important because the Aden-Algiers agreement, concluded under the auspices of President Chadli Bendjedid, has been supported by the Soviets. This agreement embodies the common denominators between Fatah and the Democratic Alliance which includes the Popular Front, the Democratic Front, the Palestine Liberation Front and the Palestinian Communist Party. These four organizations are politically and ideologically close to Moscow. Moreover, when Saudi Arabia, which represents Arab "moderation," takes part with the Algerian side in bringing the views of Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and Yasir 'Arafat closer to each other, then this means that we are on the threshold of an Arab relaxation whose godfather and main key is President al-Asad in whose personality firmness and moderation intersect.

Soviet Approach

Abu al-'Abbas, the military commander of the Palestine Liberation Front, has said that the "Algiers-Aden agreement is a formula for a political and organizational program on whose basis the PNC will be convened. This agreement is conditional upon convocation of the council. It is morally binding on those who have signed it, even though it is beyond the framework of commitment to its convocation because each organization has its own program and policies."

We asked Abu al-'Abbas about the connection between the PNC's convocation and settlement of Syrian-Palestinian differences and he answered that "convocation or non-convocation of the PNC is a Palestinian issue. However, convocation of the PNC is an important step on the path of settling Syrian-Palestinian affairs."

[Question] What new things does the Aden-Algiers agreement carry in connection with reforms within the PLO?

[Answer] Among the points agreed upon is that there will be three vice chairmen for the PLO, that there will be an elected central council with broad legislative powers and that there will be representation according to fronts in the Palestinian institutions.

[Question] Where, specifically, is the Soviet role in the issue of rapprochement between the PLO and Damascus?

[Answer] The Soviets deal with the realities on the ground. They have special relations with Syria and, at the same time, with the PLO. Consequently, they are interested in developing their relations with Syria and in bolstering PLO institutions. But the Syrian-Palestinian disagreement has not given the Soviets a special role in this regard, even though the Soviets have exerted extraordinary efforts. To put it briefly, their efforts have not been crowned so far with the success they desire, even though these efforts flow into the interest of the rapprochement for which Algiers and Aden have worked.

Beginning Dialogue

[Question] We ask Abu al-'Abbas if he expects the National Alliance (comprised of Fatah dissidents, the Popular Front-General Command, al-Sa'iqah and the Palestinian Struggle Front) to join the PNC.

[Answer] It was agreed in Algiers to begin with a comprehensive dialogue that includes all the forces and parties in the Palestinian arena, without exception. This comprehensive dialogue must take place before the convocation of the PNC. Within this framework, the Democratic Alliance has held with the National Alliance a series of meetings for a plenary meeting at the Palestinian level. These meetings have not succeeded and have encountered a major obstacle whose main cause is the preconditions set by the National Alliance for dialogue with Fatah, particularly in connection with its position vis-a-vis Yasir 'Arafat. The National Alliance considers the Algiers-Aden alliance inadequate and believes that it serves PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat. This is why this alliance has taken a stance of opposition to the Algiers agreement. As a condition for dialogue, the National Alliance has demanded that a national front be formed of the Democratic Alliance and the National Alliance as an alternative to the Algiers agreement. Naturally, the Democratic Alliance has rejected these conditions and its organizations have expressed their adherence to the Algiers agreement as a basis for a comprehensive agreement with the National Alliance. This explains the failure of the negotiations between the two alliances so far.

[Question] Do you see a possibility of settling the crisis of the Arab-Israeli conflict in the foreseeable future?

[Answer] Before talking about a settlement climate, what is the settlement? Is the objective to subjugate the area to the imperialist program or to a just settlement? There is no possibility of a joint settlement. Moreover, subjugating the area to the Israeli scheme is also impossible. As to what is being said about "just settlements," it does not seem that the balance of power permits anything of the sort. The only program capable of succeeding practically is the program to confront the occupation and to confront the Israeli scheme because this program is closest to the reality, despite the vast division that has afflicted the national and fighting forces. However, the magnificent and great popular response to the resistance against the Israeli scheme is the basic factor in unifying the national forces in the area.

Labor Party More Dangerous

[Question] What about the Israeli elections and the differences between the Likud Bloc and the Labor Party?

[Answer] Any Palestinian wager on the Labor Party comes from shortsighted people, not to say more. From a quick examination of the Labor Party program, we do not find any fundamental differences between the Labor Party programs and the programs of any other side in Israel. Consequently, we must backtrack a little to remind everyone that the Labor Party is the party that led Israel in the 1967 war and that the West Bank was occupied under the rule of this party. On our part, we feel that the Labor Party program is more dangerous to our cause than the Likud program. The main reason for this danger is the illusion afflicting some Palestinians in connection with the Labor Party's intentions and program -- an illusion that creates a state of extreme confusion within the Palestinian ranks.

Concluding his statements, Abu al-'Abbas said that "the latest Israeli elections, with the indications of radicalism they have carried, dictate that there be a Syrian-Palestinian dialogue on the ground of confronting the Israeli schemes in light of pan-Arab interests and of sound relations between the Syrian and Palestinian sides."

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